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Raghavendra

RAGHAVENDRA, HIS LIFE AND WORKS

By

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A WORD BY THE AUTHOR

It was my ambition to write the complete works of Shri Raghavendra in English which I had cherished long ago, and yet I had been postponing it for one reason or another. But this time Shri Sujayeendra Teerth Swamigal of Mantralaya included this as one of the publications to be published under the auspicies of the third centenary celebrations Mantralaya in Agust 1971. This kindled the smouldeing fire clear of its ashes so that it b'azed in all its fury. Since childhood Raghavendra has been the main source of inspiration to all my noticeable activities. This time also he stood by me day and night till the work was accumulated so much as to cover three hundred printed pages.

At first the work turned out, was very slow and almost discouraging. For I had to make my own plan, prepare a new technique to be adopted both for Raghavendra's original works and his pure commentary literature. This cannot be a word to word translation. This is an abridgement and epitomisation of Raghavendra's works to be completed within 1200 pages.

There is continuity and coherence in his original works. But the commentaries like Parimala and Bhavadeepa defy all summarisation. The only link, that can run through such commentaries can be a critical appreciation of the work based on the short summary of the original work which it comments and elucidates.

This survey of his works should be accompanied with his life sketch which will be mutually helpful to understand each other. Life throws light on the work and the work reflects his life.

So the present volume consists of life of about 150 pages and the works have been begun with Geeta Vivriti or Geetartha Sangriha. Raghavendra's Vivriti is a solid contribution to understand the interpratation of Geeta of Shri Madva. I would have gladly followed the chronological order of the books written by him. For want of that I was perfectly free in my choice of works to begin the book; and I choose Geeta Vivriti for very sound reasons which I need not expatiate upon here. I have offered abuout 100 pages of his works. This is the first volume and the work will be complete in four volumes

First I must seek the blessinge of the Swamijee for having helped me to bring to light my work in English. I need not applogoise for writing in English For English is still the cultural language of India, and our Country can hope to communicate with foreign countries only in English

Then my thanks are due to Vidyaratna. Dr. Sarojini Mahishi M.A. LL.B., Phd. state minister for Tourism and civil Aviation, for her learned Foreword.

Next I must thank Hombali Brothers for having spared no pains in finishing the work in time; I must also thank Huddar Bros Dhawar, for the beautiful design and neat priniting of the Jacket-I am anxiously waiting for the appreciation of the English knowing public, which is the real meed for all my labours, and which I hope will be liberly coming forth in good time

Gadag
1st Aug 1971

G B Joshi

FOREWORD

by: Vidyaratna Dr. Sarojini Mahishi M.A.LL, B. Phd.

On the banks of the river Tungabhadra stands a small village 'Mantralaya' rendered holy by the Saint Raghavendra who has chosen it as his permanent abode. The fact that the land therein was associated with the performance of sacrifice by Prahlad, must have been one of the reasons for the selection of the village as the last resting place. In fact it is no rest at all for the Great Preceptor and philosopher, who is bent on helping the people in distress; Irrespective of caste or creed, sex or age, people throng at his place day in and day out: But Nobody to tell him of his happy story; No person who has not undergone the sufferings of this mortal world may think of of appreaching him. But for the suffering humanity, he is the gem of a Healer. Any one on whom he bestows his mercy would be the blessed one: Guru Raghavendra is always surrounded by patients suffering from various physical and mental disabilities, girl, wanting to get married and settle, and boys having no employment Raghavendra promptly attends to the work of the devotees, would cling on to him. The nature and magnitude of the difficulty of the devotee is no problem to the Guru-By his grace, the dumb cnn talk and the lame can go up the hil'.

On one hand he is the Master, who can order things, impose or reduce the penalty by 'Prabhu Sammita', on the other, like a good friend in need. he helps all those' by 'Mitra Sammita', when the devotees dedicate themselves to the Guru He tells the devotees— " कर्मण्ये वाधि कारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन" Go on doing your duty, I shall take care of the result".

The devotee works at the most for himself and his family but the Guru has to work for the entire mankind. He may not be requiring anything for himself but he has to work for the society. "लोकसंग्रहमेवापि संपर्यन् कर्तुमहिंस। the service by the Yogin is for the entire mankind at large If he does not do the work, as Lord Krishna said, others would try to imitate him-

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः

The problem may be a small one from the point of view of Guru; qut the magnitude of the problem is decided in co-relation with the outlook and importance attached to it by the suffering man

Shri Raghavendra Swamiji an ardent follower of the Madhva philosophy elucidated the same in various commentaries written by him. With his preachings and practice, Madhva philosophy of dualism was simplified to a very great extent.

Man is always a 'sadhaka' and by his 'sadhana' he tries to serve his Master-

श्रीमन्मध्वमते हरि:परतरः सत्य जगत् तत्वत. सर्वे जीवगणा: हरे रनुचराः।

Hari is the highest deity; the world is a reality and all beings are the followers of Hari. Madhva's argument thar even 'Nirguna Nirakar' is also an attribute of the deity, is very much appealing. Hence Guru Raghavendra also tried his level best to obey his Master's command and in the service of mankind even today he is discharging the duties entrusted to him by his Master.

Guru Raghavedra Swami entered into Samadhi alive three hundred years ago. The spiritual powers of Swamiji to heal the wouds of people in distress is getting more and more effective. If the devotee. If the devotee wants the Guru to undergo any examination. Gurn is willing to do that: In fact he has appeared for many tests at the hands of his devotees! He has abundant affection for his devotees.

My respects are due to His Holiness Shri Sujayindra Thirtha Swamiji for his kind blessings

Coming from the pen of a veteran writer as that of Shri G. B Joshi, I hope, the book would be appreciated by thousands of people in the country

New Delhi July 31, 1971 Sarojini Mahishi

PREFACE

Raghavendra's life is not a history of dry events; but it is poetry of poverty and suffer ing, love and compassion saturated with devotion surcharged with spiritual energy and inspired with sublime ideals. Raghavendra is a star shining apart and yet a friend of the poor and the fallen. He hates sin but pities the sinful. He is most uncompromising in his philosophy of truth, but most generous and liberal with those who profess it. He is one of those saints who solve the riddles of life with courage and conviction.

Modern man tossed and torn between isms and logies, puzzled and co founded by the conflicting ideas, tired and troubled with ills of life, is fortunately thrown on the shores of his compassion. His humane kindness and hopeful message blows over the afflicted man like a gentle wind and wakes him from his stupor. Soft words of his message breathe in him new life. "Endeavour and act with spring in your feet, joy in your heart and faith running through all your deeds". This is the message Raghavendra has received from his Master Madhva and he is there to spread it throughout the world.

This trumpet call has awakened the people from their sloth and slumber. "Raghavendra, Raghavendra" is echoing among the trees and hills. "Have pity on me, Gururaj" is floating on the waters of the river Winds carry the message to the miserable and the wretched. From every house the morning smoke lifts the soul-soothing word "Raghavendra" to the sky-The word Raghavendra dances on the tongue of the young, mixes with the smile of the fair, sallies forth with the strong to the front, and sleeps gently on the sick-bed, and opens up a dream of hope with the forlorn. The magical word has reached the farthest corner of the Earth to alleviate pain, has soared high to the sky holding hope in its beak to encou--rage every soul that is wronged and distressed. It has sunk deep to the core of every heart to touch it with heavenly bliss. Thousands lift their hands up and raise their voice to the sky to repeat the word "Raghavedra" in intoxicating ecstacy, burning sincerity, and humble gratitude.

He is the brilliant star of morning and evening. For, he offers and makes available to us, all the pleasures and amenities of life. But he wants us to enjoy those pleasures not

as slaves to them but as masters of them. Raghavendra is a great lover of this world and life in it. For he still lives in Brindavan in his astral body, looking after the spiritual well-being of his fold which is as wide as the world itself. No national barriers or caste divisions or differences of faith put limitations on his unlimited compassion. His heart goes out to weep with the sweeper and leap with joy with the jolly lucky. Hence we say that Raghavendra is the most brilliant star of the morning, heralding a lucky day to the awakened world. He is the harbinger ushering in a glorious day with the supreme truth that Narayan is the all-doer, all pervading and all compassionate.

Raghavendra is equally the solemn star of the evening. He does not deny the sorrows and miseries of life. They are not an unreal dream; but with him they are the hard facts of life They must be reckoned with, faced and coquered. Night is as real as day. It is Narayan who is the giver of both life and death (भरणअपन्द). Raghavendra recognises life with rich gifts and death, casting a long shadow.

It is the question of grief and death that has made life serious. How to get rid of these foes of life and make life really enjoyable? Raghavendra is not only a compassionate saint, he is also an ast ute philosopher. As his heart leaps with joy to see the rich and beautiful world leading us to the richer and more beautiful creator. Narayan, his mind becomes grave and serious to see the sorrows of life and tyranny of death. He gives us a philosophy of life in which life is a play and Leela of the Lord Narayan, an exuberance of his Anand and effervescence of innumerable and un-limited auspi cious qualities which are nothing but himself. It is He who in His supreme wisdom and kindness has put us to grief in royal jest and naturally it is He, who can release us from the sorrows of life. "Surrender to his sweet will unreservedly" is the only method Raghavendra has followed, and realised his life and conquered his death. He with his body entered Bridavan and now lives in effulgent life with a resplendent body

His career is a rich course of good deeds with holy merit which has accumilated into a huge mountain. But he is not a spiritual miser. Liberally he used a part of this heavy accumulation to pave the path of Mukti. Some would be transmuted into spiritual joy in his released life of Mukti. Yet the accumulation of religious merit hung heavily upon him. Even flowers accumulated turn into a heavy heap which suffocates the

spirit Raghavendra wisely made a plan of disposing the valuable and yet heavy weight of merits He is using these shining coins to purchase food for the hungry-to supply issues to the issueless, mo ney to the needy, medicines to the diseased. His munificient gifts, his rich donatsons have saved many families from the excruciating pain of death. His help is timely His pity is active. His service is saving. The rich wealth of his merit when accumulated was a terrible burden but when liberally distributed is becoming a light bank balance to him.

The effects of good, as well as the effects of evil stand a hindrance to spiritual realisation. This sel fish benevolence continues till the heap is exhausted. But Raghavendra does not like to throw us into a life of greed, lust and carnal pleasures and worldly joys. He simply induces us with worldly oves and lures to go near Him. Once he smilesupon us our hearts will open to him and in this mystic communion of the hearts lies the future destiny of mankind.

As shri Raghavendra's emotion has matured into devotion to God Narayan, his intellect has blossomed into beautiful works of commenties, and elucidations of his maste'rs pithy sentences. They are the monumental works on Indian philo-

sophy Great philosophy of Madhva teaches that there is but one God who transcends the universe and yet is immanent in it. He is the supreme Truth of life. World and life in the world are not less real than this supreme reality. Life is real and earnest. Man has lost his innate privilege of purity and bliss being engulfed in this life But it is the supreme will of Narayana to play this game of creation and adjustment to his will it the only way of escape. This adjustment gives rise to sweet devotion and the eternal bond of Love ties us with the Supreme.

But our minds are clouded with the conceit of the inventions in science which has blinded us to the existance of God Himself. But human destiny and the fulfilment of creation lies in removing this conciet and cloud and establishing the supreme bond of love which ties the human world to the feet of God. Revival and regeneration of this fine feeling in the heart of man is the supreme need of the hour and Raghavendra has imposed upon himself this labour of love

Now our duty is to co-operate with him in the awakening of the spirit in us to the reality of the world. Let us not pester him with our petty demands of worldly ameliorations Let us rise to the occasion and sharpen our intellect with all the retinue in its struggle to catch the glimpse of reality. Only its aim should be to accept its defeat and melt with its whole personality into continual flow of love towards Lord Narayan unchecked by sorrows and unimpeded by other odds of life and pain of death. Raghavendra has lived his philosophy of life and has taught the world not merely by precept but by example the serious lesson of life. Hence he is called the star of the evening.

It is not a wonder that such a compassionate Saint and deep philosopher who had a thrilling life and a stirring philosohy should appeal to the modern man who has been attracted to him more by his miracles than by the merits of his philosophy. But miracles are the least part of his life. Let us read his life which is more fascinating than fiction, yet revealing a real man who struggled hard against the crushing poverty and other odds of life, with heart within and faith above. His life is the reflection of the wonderful man who was denied the very necessities for life and yet he rose to the highest pitch of his realisation with a steady aim and unflinching faith in the dispensations of Sri, Narayan. Yon will also read his philosophy

which is essentially vedic and in which he claims no more originality than living it. He was the humble voice of his Master Madhya who is endearingly called Anandateertha-So the poet, Narayanacharya in his Mahakavya Raghavendra Vijaya well says that Saraswati was reminded of Madhva when she saw Raghavendra trying to preserve Vedic Lore by writing intelligent elucidations on the Shastras-Likewise the poet recognises the tenderness of his heart compared with which butter is said to be hard as stone. I conclude this short preface in the words of the same poet "that I write the present preface my mind being attracted towards him by his magnetic personality". I dedicate this my humble effort in admiring adoration to the feet of Shri-Raghavendra and crave the indulgence of the readers and request them to appreciate it for its contact with his holy feet, if not for its original merit

Gadag 1-7-1977 G. B. Joshi

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Since the printing and publishing of the first Edition in 1971 much water has flown under our feet. Great changes have taken place of universal importance. Some changes have shaken Life to its very roots in India political and economic changes have bewildered even the most sober thinkers and roused the cynic doubters. In the consternation that has confused the world in the convulsions that have shook the world and in the turbulant floods that have swept the world, we found the very truth was threatend with extinction. But even this dark cloud hanging over us had a silver lining. Every where there was motion; but something moving on was traced at least dimly in it. Man is slowly being convinced that the outside world is merely a scaffold built round the inner truth. Slowly and steadily his attention has been directed and fixed on this inner something. When this inner truth has captured the Keenest sight of man, for guidance and light he has been unearthing from the womb of the earth evidences of spiritual attainments in art and lilaratune. Raghavendra.

the most unfailing spiritual guide, no doubt historically belongs to the past; yet spiritually belongs to the present and to the future. For this saint of universal love has an abiding interest in the human life and its destiny. That is why the edition has run out of print. The credit goes to the popularity of the saint and we have only the satisfastion that we have contributed our mite to the cause of the spread of his message to the world. But we must thank the present pontifical head of Shri Raghavendra swami mutt for having generously helped to reprint this popular book when the first edition was exhaused. Let this Prove to be a kindly Light to the forlorn sailor completely lost in the troubled waters.

GADAG MAHA SAMARADHANA DAY Shravan bahula Dwiteeya of Pingala 30th August 1977. G B Joshi

A FORE TASTE OF GEETA

You find the secret which made Raghavendra's life, grand and sublime, in Geeta. It is a direct gospal to man to make him perfect what he potentially is Geeta gives a theory of life the greatness of which gradually emerges as it is practiced in life. It is a practical philosoply of life. It racognises the problems of life in all theis varieties of colours. The vast and endless and eternal Life is clearly and comprehensively apprehanded by God Krishna in its subtleties and is shown that it is not a lonely traveller in empty space, but it is fulfilling the promlse, through its activities, of the highest intelligence taking keen interest with Kind sympathy in this eahibition-Man is not the only actor but he is the sole actor in this universal drama. Geeta is a hand book of stage directions to this drama. Of course very intelligent use of this is expected.

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PART 1

SHRI. RAGHAVENDRA'S LIFE

CHAPTER 1

A genius or a hero or a Saint is an essen tial constituent of the causes that lead to the progress of the world. It is not bread alone that contributes to the progress of the world-Moral strength and spiritual awakening comprise the Light that guides the world in the right direction. The poet sings his song and keeps the world alive to the moral obligation of The hero protects and safeguards the freedom of man and keeps him from wanton encroachments and tyrannical aggres ions. It is the Saint that touches the deeper layers of man and wakes him from his physical stupor convinces him of moral down fall and helps him to rise and live in spiritual strength and divine light. The heights of human destiny are disclosed to man and the methods of scaling those heights are taught to him by the Saint by example and precept

The world has natural tendency to fall down to material level, to make effort to get dry and drab necessities of life and man becomes satisfied with fulfilling those necessities. He forgets that he is a soul and has a higher and spiritual life which he must live for his perfection.

Sometimes the whole nation is stuck into the bodily life but the inner spirit cries out loudly for spiritual awakening. Mere pious wish does not help mankind to rise from the miserable fall. It requires stupendous effort and strength which he cannot rally for effective operation. He cries loudly for divine assistance and we find a Saint is born in our midst, to lead us from despair and disappointment, to hope and success on the pathway to God A Saint comes to the world to fulfil the earnest desire of mankind. Hence it is said in Geeta that whenever there is degeneration on account of the fall of Dharama, God appears himself in the world. So the birth of a Saint and his presence in our midst is a universal necessity for spiritual uplift of mankind

The surest sign of degeneration of mankind is the undue importance given to reason, so as to disturb the divine balance kept between feeling, activity, and reason. Questioning everything, might have brought about the birth of science; but it has dried up the fount head of life and has reduced life to a dry and dreary desert. Regeneration and rehabilitation can be brought about only by

restoring the balance by assigning their respective places to these three functions of ours

The saint accepts the challenge of reason and from his very birth he goes on proving to the world that all that reason arrogates to itself is due to its sheer vanity. The saint reveals to the world that there is much in this universe which is beyond its reach. It is faith and activity that will ultimately help man-kind to realise its spiritual destiny. Hence the Saint performs miracles which challenge science and razes to the ground all mansions that it has built before man-kind to allure its homage.

From beginning to the end of life the Saint goes on restoring the faith of man. His lost soul is given back to man. The forgotten and forsakenGod is placed on the pedastal of his heart. Instead of syllogisms and arguments a pure song of love and devotion comes out of his mouth His life is a consecrated dedication and unreserved surrender to the sweet will of God. His reason and activity have achieved the highest realisation and fulfilment as they yield the highest delight and joy in the life.

Man is not a fatalist or idle dreamer. He becomes a staunch advocate of ceaseless activity all dedicated to God; reason clearly and surely shows him the path of faith assuring mankind that everything is fulfilled through love and service.

Rahgavendra dedicated his life and works to the restoration of unflinching faith in God-He was born in this world because there was a need for him; there was a call for him, a wild call which could not be brushed aside He could not treat it indifferently. If mankind was not saved from disaster at the critical time, the world would pay a heavy penalty for it

He had saved the world from the tyranny of reason and the consequent loss of faith in God, in the Pauranik or legendary times of Hiranya Kashipu, when man was all in all, and needed no God for the creation and protection of the Hiranyakashipu universe. was a stark materialist and used even the spiritual attainments for material gain. He taught the people atheistic lessons and challenged the people to show him God if there was any of that Kind Prahlad grievously hurt by the collosal ignorance of his father and of mankind of which he was a symbol, had to accept the challenge of his father and underwent untold sufferings and killing oppressions for his faith in God-He did not stop his revolt and agitation till all

drakness was dispelld and ignorance was torn into meaningles shreds and knowledge and devotion were restored to mankind.

Reghavendra had to appear in the historical times when Vijayanagar Empire was thriving in prosperity. He appeared in the name of Vyasaraya and had many sided activities all tending towards the renasene of spiritual knowledge, regeneration of moral ideals, propogation and propoganda of life of devotion and dedication and establishment of this sort of life as the summum bonum of life, on the intellectual plane. More than these, he brought into existence a band of poets and devotees dedicated to reach the message of Vyasaraja to every door, singing songs composed by them in kannada. Vyasaraja saved the king of Vijayanagar from an astronomical crisis of Kuhu yoga, himself offering to sit on the thorne during that horrible period. He proved to the world the efficacy of spiritual sirength and its superiority over physical strength. Though a great devotee absorbed in ecstatic meditation and engaged in composing songs of love and devotion, he hid not shun and hate intellectual ism. To those who took to argument and reasoning he replied through the same medium and convincingly proved superiority of devoted life and faith He developed the art of dialectical reasoning for the firist time in the history of Dwaita philosophy, wrote works like Nyayamrita and Bhedojjivana establishing the reality of the world, superiority and supremacy of Bramhan: existence of innumerable Souls, yet proving the unity of the world and Brahman, not by proving the illusory nature of the world but by proving the independence of Brahman and the depedence of the world. His Tarkatandaya is a hand book of Logic superseding all such works of different schools. And Chandrika is really a delightful commentary proving that Madhva's interpretation of Brahma sutra is the real interpretation in the right spirit of Sutrakara. He organised a band of Dasas or servants devoted to God and singing His supremacy, His love and compassion, and undisputed authority over the world and its affairs. They went from door to door sang the divine songs to the common mass and roused them to their sense of duty and higher life. They have left a rich legacy to the future generation which, when properly used keeps us awake to our spiritual destiny. Vyasaraya at last spent the best part of his life in worshipping God Venktesh who even now thrills us with spiritual experience however momentary it might be-

Now the third incarnation is Raghavendra He has the same mission before him and he has the same message for the afflicted world. But he has more work to do when he has become free from the mortal body and moves in astral body. He bodily entered the Bridavan which is now the holy custodian of his physical body. His subtle body is more accommodating to his world wide activity and convenient to sek communication with man in his dreams and visions. His life and mission extends over many centuries as he has been credited with seven hundred years of presence in the Brindayan. From there radiate the beams of spisitual glow constantly keeping watch over the trends and inclinations of the world and jealously guarding the spiritual interest of mankind as radar would guide the aircraft in unknown regions of space.

The development of science is presenting problems of staggering magnitude for man to solve; if he cannot, he would be crushed under the juggernaut wheel of technical development. Now Saint Raghavendra has picked up the gauntlet thrown down by science, along with others, to save the world from the clutches of science. He will prove that spirit and not Science will save the world from the imminent catastrophe.

What science has done by its exmperiments spirit is going to achieve in a mysterious manner, and more than that, the spirit is going to open the doors of inner life of man which is a forbidden land now. The very physical ladder of Yoga will wive man ascent into spiritual heights and descent into depths of inner life which will extend the period of his life, enlarge the field of his activity, energise his senses and gear up his whole life to the needs of spiritual unfolding. Reghavendra ministers medicine, operates and cures dangerous growths in body, performs miracles, all based on the strength of spiritual power.

Hence we want to study life, not through the narration of incidents and events of his life but through their interpretation and evaluation, so that the right sort of apprecition of his wonderful life would present before us, his holy personality, his unbounded compassion for the griefstricken multitude, his unswerving faith in God and his love and service of man-kind.

CHAPETR II.

Heritage plays an important part in the development of the personality No doubt genius works inspite of uncongenial heritage. Yet the full unfolding of the genius is hastened and made easy by congenial parentage. Raghavendra was fortunate enough to be born in a family of pandits of great Scholarship and accomplished vocal musicians and instrumentalists. They were famous as Veena players and the geneology could be traced back to one Krishnabhat of Gautamagotra who was a court musician in the court of Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagar His son was Kanakachalabhat who was a chip of the old block and a famous Vainika Thimmanabhat was his son and was the father of our hero. He was a wellversed scholar inthe vedas and played magically on the Veena

In the fatal battle of Rakkasa Tangadagi Vijayanagar was defeated with heavy casualties, loot and arson. All those who had Court patronage had to flee from the court for safety and protection. Timmannabhat came to his Guru Surendrateertha and made the best of this opportunity. Thus he was a great scholar, a prodigy in music, a pundit in shastras an adventurer of extraordinary courge and forbearance, a veteran fighter against odds of life. He was very lucky

in having a loving and dutiful wife Gopikamba, who kept the house calm and clean for meditation and worship.

Such a family is an enviable place to be born into, for a Saint Hence Krishna in Geeta assures the aspirant, birth in a pure and pious family to cotinue his course of discipline which one had discontidued in former life. Timmanabhat and Gopikamba were the best fitted custodians to take charge of Raghavendra in his earthly career For they were God minded and implicitly believed in the ways of God Both hbsband and wife keenly felt the absence of issue. Rearing of children is one of the coveted pleasures in life and its absence is keenly and painfullyfelt by a young couple For they feel that the issue is a fulfilent of married life and hence issulessness is a frustrati on in life. Besides there is a social degradation for a married woman if she is not blessed with a child A barren woman is a scapegoat bearing all the sins of the family on her back. More than all these a childless father or a mother finds no place in heaven and his or her forefathers or manes curse him or her, for having broken the chain of the geneology irretievably-

Thus Thimmannabhat and Gopikamba waited patiently for some years and yearned and pined

for issue in vain. Frustration led to dejection and depression Life seemed to be dull and dreary and they lost interest in all worldly affairs. Yet their attention was drawn more and more towards piety and righteousness. They developed a sort of ascetic detachment and absorbing devotion. They thought of serving and worshipping Venkatesh at Tirupati who was well known for showering gifts and blessings on the devotees.

Just as careful cultivation is the pre-requisite condition for sowing seeds. so also purification and austerities are considered essential on the part of parents for a holy saint to be born of them. When thus the ground was prepared Gopikamba conceived. Timmannabhat moved with his wife to Tundeer mandal and sought the patronage of Shivappa Nayak of Tanjore in whose court there were such learned Pandits as Appayya Dixit, Vijayeendrateerth and Tatacharya.

In due course of time Gopikamba gave birth to two children one female and another male. The female child was called Venkatamba and the male was called 'Gururaja'. Timmannabhat was not satisfied with these two. For he had instinctively felt that he was to be the father of a great soul of distinguished spiritual career. The two new born were the harbingers to herald the coming of the

great soul. This was his firm belief, and an absorbing dream to him. The dream was not impossible to be realised if Venkatesha were pleased to bless him.

It was the supreme will of God that Prahlad, the great Bhagavata should visit the world again to revive Bhagavata Dharma Much spade work had already been done by many in this direction. Bhaga vata Dharma is a religion for the whole of the world to be followed and professed by all persons young and old, rich and poor, Hindus and non-Hindus, and men and women started by Narayan Himself Its aim was to reach God Naranavan through ethical integrity and spiritual enlightenment and unreserved surrender to the supreme will of God. Devotion and love is its path-way to God. This religion claimed the homage of all nations at all times It claimed to cure all religions of their accretions and seccretions and made them flow in the right direction Such a universal religion had no aim to supersede the claims of other. Gods or other religions, but it approches other religions as a mother bird would approach its youg ones to Shri Vedavyasa himself tilled the feed them. land of Vedas and sowed the seeds of this religion. They sprouted and became young plants by the

efforts of many. Madhva gave a sound philosophy to this world religion. Jayateertha, Vyasaraya Vijayeendra spared no pains to see these plants flowers profusely. But it was left to the credit of Raghavendra that these plants should bear fruit.

Prahlad was the right person to bear the responsibility of such a heavy task. He not only preached religion but lived it and loved it. He suffered all sorts of threats and punishments. He was thrown down from the heights of the mountains to deep depths of the ocean. He was thrown into the fire and bit by the serpents. Still he did not disown his religion that Narayan was his father and Laxmi was his mother. God is every where in and out of the world. He is the supreme Lord of the universe. To Prahlad his religion was his breath; he would live with it and die without it. He preached this sweet religion to all children and asked them to live it even in their childhood. 'Love all; Live well; do your duty to please God' was the faith of his religion 'Seek solitude or live in society; but do not forget God' was the warning given to man by this great devotee.

Now it was the Supreme will of God to revive Bhagavata Dharma and spread it among all the nations that are trying to cut one anther's throat Love and Light are two wings of this great bird; and men tired of hating and fighting would sweetly rest under their shadow

So Prahlad was to visit the world as Raghavendra on an heavenly errand of spresding the message of Love and devotion. This task was well suited to the history of his spiritual enlightenment. For the Summum Bonum of spiritual life is salvation or moksha which is nothing more than a natural life of the soul. Life is a dome of many colours' and man lives a life of perversions as long as he is bound to this earth. It is the revelation of God himself that puts an end to these perversions. God Narayan with gracious smile and compassionate look burns the mountain load of Karma that has been accumulated since long. Before one is entitled to salvation he must show balance nil in the earthly banks. mental effects of good and bad deeds are both hindrances to salvation. Grace of Gad saves him from Papa Karma. Of the Punya Karma Some. is useful even in Moksha. That he will keep for himself. But there is some Punya which is an obstruction to Moksha That he must dispose of. ShriRaghavendra before he attains Moksha should dispose of this unwanted collection of punya-He now came to the earth to get rid of this punya

which he would distribute among his devotees and on the stength of that Punya the devotees would get their desired objects.

But this distribution is not mercinary on the part of Raghavendra. His main object is to initiate his devotees into the cult of Bhagavata Dharma. Just to attract them at the first instance he would humour them with the fulfilment of their desires. Ultimately his aim is to teach them the lessons of Love and devotion. He uses these miracles to disprove the modern notions of science. Science has no access to the land of spirit Raghavendra's first object is to disprove Scientific atheism by showing that God exists and there is a soul different from the body. This is the first step in Bhagavata Dharma and Ragha vendra would help his devotees to have these men tal convictions through the fulfilment of their desired objects on the strength of his punya-

Thus his eligibility and his purpoe of getting rid of Punya qualified him for his responsible task and Prahlad was born as Shri Raghavendra in the family of Timmanabhat as their son-

A Saint is a god-given gift to the pining world which is eagerly awaiting his arrival to bless it with compassion and guidance. Shri Venktesha helped Timmanabhat to realise his dream and

CHAPTER III.

Timmanabhat and his wife were elated with joy at the birth of this child. From conception on an auspicious day, to delivery on a still more anspicious day the foetus had developed and had lent a peculiar charm to the mother. The desires of this pregnant woman were restricted to very pious longings of a righteous soul. She had developed a sort of aversion towards all things worldly which was writ large on her face. Gopikamba now bearing the burden of the world-Saint showed signs of pleasant exhaustion. The birth of the child assured a happy releif to the mother and a happier relief to the exhausted world.

Thimmanbhat enjoyed a peculiar bliss with the expectation of a very bright future to the family at the arrival of this divine messenger. A mysterious satisfaction crept over his mind as if his life had realised the highest ideal. The enjoined ceremonies were performed scruplously and the boy was named 'Venkatanath'.

The child went through crawling and toddling before he could walk erect and correct. The juvenile activites of the child with slips and lapses were a source of delight to the parents and neighbours. The boy while recapitulating

the bilogical steps in the development of the body, seemed to go through all stages of spiritaul progress. In the sixth month the child was given food for the first time with due ceremony

In the third year there were the tonsure and the initiation ceremony into the reading and writing of the alphabet. The father wrote 'aum' on the sand and the child was asked to read and write after him. The inquisitive and precocious child asked the father to explain to him how 'aum' by etymological connotation meant the all pervasive Brahman. The father found himself puzzled. His vain fondness for him as his son melted like dew before the sun. He recognised that the child was a great soul in disguise. He recollect ed that he was told in his dream that a great devotee of God would be born to him. He was overcome with joy and a feeling of awe and rever ence arose in his mind. A thrilling shudder ran through out the body with hair standing on end. He felt he should fall down at the feet of the tiny child. But self-conceit had not left him-Yet he felt the child belonged to him and none could dispute his claim over the child. He was reminded of Madhyagehabhat, the father of Shri. Madhva. The father dwindled into a poor pigmy before the pyramid, his son

Thimmanna also would suffer the same sort of humiliation at the hands of his Saintly son. But, for the present, his position was secure and he would continue to be the lucky father of an extra-ordinary son.

When the question was asked by the child, he was surprised at his precocity and he fondly drew the child near him and clasping him in his close embrance, smelt his head with parental affection. People then talked abuot the child in all reverance and said that he was a modern Prahlada. The child followed the lessons with unabated energy and enthuslasm.

Timmanbhat was a lucky man. He had no worries in his domestic life. He had a devoted wife and loving children, and had a highly educa ted and cultured man as his son in-law. Laxmi narashinhcharya; the husband of his daughter was an eminent Pandit of Kashyapa Gotra-Thus he was assured of happiness, both in this world and in the next. Gururaja's study had continued showing rapid progress. His thread ceremony had been performed and Thimmanabhat was now carefree and he thought that his life in future had a safe sailing.

By this time Shri- Vijayeendra had expired and Shri Sudheendrateerth had succeeded him.

Thimmanabhat was again invited to visit Mutt by Sudheendra Teerha. At the time of Vijayee ndra, The mutt had loomed large in the estimation of the Vaishnava Public on account of the publication of independent works of Vijayee ndra which raised the standard of controversial and dialectic literature to a high eminence. His solid contributions to Dwaita philosophy were recognised by the pandit world.

So Timmanabhat thought that he should not let go this opportunity. Readily he accepted the invitation, and went to Kumbhakonam with his family. In the Vidya Mutt he was cordially received by the pontifical head, Shri Sudheendrateerth, who was highly pleased with the child Venkanna for his devotion, eleverness and ready wittedness. Sudheendrateerth recognised in the boy a great soul in disguise. He was now a spark which would blaze in future into a great conflagration. He was a genius and a prodigy who would unfold, in due course, in great effulgence. So sudheendrateerth congratulated Timmannabhat on having such a gifted son. The Pundit received rich gifts from the swamiji and returned to his village.

In old age Timmannabhat was harassed by poverty and misery. But he endured it courage-

ously. His only desire was to see that his children were educated. But he did not live long to see his third son, a distinguished Pandit. He succumbed to illness and expired peacefully repeating the name of Narayana.

His funeral obsequies were duly performed under the supervision of his son-in law Laxminarasinhachar. He accepted the responsibility of the education of Gururaj who was now married

Venkanna must have felt the pangs of povetry and the grief of death. The young boy for the first time felt how destitute he was at the sad death of his father. He had the bitter taste for the first time of the ills of life.

Yet his education continued without stop-He had committed to memory Amarakosh a versified dictionary of Sanskrit synonyms. He had also gone through the discipline of declension of nouns and pronouns and conjugation of roots He had got himself initiated into the study of Literature especially poetry.

But his behaviour had suddenly become strange since he came from the mutt. The atmosphare there had affected the innermost recessess of his spiritual being. His talk with Swamiji had galvanized his mind into su pernatu

ral activity. Something that was so long hidden from him, came and stood before him It lashed the brain into abnormal vibrations of high frequency. He was subjected to mental afflictions of a serious type, the one note of which was negligence of duty. He could not recognise this mysterious agent of mental disturbance, and in his helpessneess he surrendered himself to God Narayan in love and devotion as a hungry child would approach his mother. He often fell into trance and deep meditation. He was fondly attached to MulaRama which haunted his dreams and wakeful hours.

The elder brother Gururaj performend his Upanayana ceremony and took him to Laxminarashinhachar for further study. Venkanna took kindly to his studies. For he found the same kind of ecstatic delight in being absorbed in studies as he would find, in his meditations of MulaRama. He had not lost his interest in' such Indian games as Kabaddi in which one is required to hold breath for a long time. In whatever activities he was engaged, he would attend to them on the plane of the lower levels of his consiciousness, the higher part of it was fully dedicated to Mula Rama. Thus he developed an

inner life in which he was the master of all he surveyed and there was none to dispute him-

His study covered Literature including dramas, Logic, Grammar and philosophy. One thing could be marked out by any one who closely observed him, that he was not an exclusive introvert absorbed in meditation. Rather he had maintained a sweet balance between his extrovert and introvert tendencies. He would find as much joy in out-side activities as in inward thinking and meditation. For even in outside activities his mental absorption was not in the least disturbed. So he maintained keenest intrerest in polemical disputes and intellectual attainments, not in cotrovention of spiritual meditation but contributing to its sweetness. This gives us a clue to understand his enigmatic personality which found an equal outlet in composing sweet songs, in carrying on dialectical discussion, and in writing works dedicated to exposition and elucidation of subtle philosophical works of higher authorities. All these activities did not disturb his vogic meditations of superb concentration and sweet visions. This showed that not only his mental age was more advanced than his bodily age, but his spiritual age was still higher than these two He was in a higher stage of spiritual

realisation than either his mental development or bodily growth.

In his previous incarnations he had attained spiritual development of the highest order. He had the intuitive vision of Narayana, and now in the third incarnation he was simply going through certain necessary stages of revival and recapitulation of spiritual attainments. His only work now is two fold one is to get rid of unnecessaey hindrances to the final attainment, and the other is to carry out the behest of the Lord to dedicate himself to the service of man-kind. Loka sangriha, which will help him to ease his path and to get additional delight and bliss in his released life. The best form of public service is to spread Bhagavata Dharma, and reach its message to all parts of the world

His skill in music both vocal and instrumental was very congenial and conducive to spiritual attainments. Sweet tunes and notes easily led him to meditation and when he pou ed forth his spirit into sweet ragas he was not sorry to have left his meditations. This was the rich heritage he had inherited from his forefathers. The one song that is credited to his authorship well exhibits his intense devotional feeling, his self—surrender, his dedication to His feet, his

unreserved confessions and his complete absorption.

After adolescence he stepped into youth and had now a charming personality. He had the resplendent glow of the spirit fully reflected on his face. The more learned he was the more humble and modest he became. Solemnity settled sweet in his figure. His broad chest clearly indicated the manly quality of indomitable courage. Venkanna was very handsome and his stature and proportion were ideal. His face was an index to his cultured and catholic mind. His grave appearance raised high hopes of ideal development and growth.

It was now the duty of the elder brother Gururaja to take the responsibility of his younger brother's marriage, when he had attained the age fit for marriage. He selected the bride from the learned family nearby, and had the marriage performed with pipe and pomp befitting the occasion.

CHAPTER IV

Venkanabhat was very happy in the first flush of emotion of honeymoon days. He lived with his wife in his village. But soon he found himself in finanical stringency. His father had suffered a lot in the latter part of his life from dire poverty when he lost royal patronage. After his death brother Gururaja had somehow tried to make both ends meet, with the help of Laxmi narasinhachar. He was fairly p oficient in Vedic lore and it must not have been very difficult for him to teach some students and eke out his living by approaching some rich men-But Venkannabhat was a man of self respect and never condecended to beg any one, or to live on the bounties of others. Besides he had an ambition to become a distinguished Pandit and was very eager to popularize the tenets of Madhva, so nicely expostulated by Jayateertha. For he thought this to be the greatest service to God. Then he wished to slip into a trance and enjoy the deepest absorption attended with ecstatic delight. But all this was nipped cruelly in the bud by the killing cares and worries of a life of poverty. He was deeply engrossed in this thought, but he only entered a blind alley as he could not find any way out of the problem. Thus days and months rolled on. He thought of going to Laxminarayanachar for higher studies' But he found his wife a mill-stone round his neck, and therefore he left the idea

Saraswatibti was the boloved wife of young Venkaoachat. She was highly devoted to him and knew his likes and dislikes instinctively. She thanked God for having been able to marry such a pious young man devoted to God and to study. She was keenly alive to the poor condition of the family and realised that her husband was making Supreme efforts to keep her statisfied and happy. She also knew that his mind stood like a rock impervious to storms and tempests that blew upon it She also found that his source of strength was Mula Rama on whom he relied against all ills in life. Each of them was highly sensitive to the feelings of the other and whenever one found the other, depressed and dejected sunny humour and intelligent wit played their part and both of them laughed out emberassing worry in no time.

Saraswati soon became pregnat and after nine nonths gave birth to a son. All the sanctifying rites were duly performed and he was named Laxminaryan. As the family grew in number povery was felt more and more keen. The favoured few are beset with pinching poverty. For, God has declared that he would rob a man of his wealth if he wished to favour him. Venkannabhat was an apt illustration of this declaration. It is very difficult to describe his sufferings his hardships due to harassing scarcity and appalling poverty. The proverbial poverty of Kuchela in Dwapara had been as it were repeated in Kaliyuga in the dreadful poverty of Venkannabhat.

The whole family lived in abject poverty. She had only one saree in which she was clad. It was tattered and torn. As for her son Laxmi narayan, he was stark naked. Her husband had no more than a small piece of cloth marked out by innumerable holes. His wife got a piece of coarse cloth once a year.

There was not sufficient food stuff even for a day in store. Rice was rarely found with curry. They had no oil for their hair even once in a year. Ghee had been served to them only in their marriage. A leaf to serve food on, was not available to them Hence food was served for some days on the floor.

Yet there was no grumbling or moaning on the part of both. Hardship had made Saraswatibai more humble and suffering had made Venkanna

bhat more devoted to God. Both of them ungrudgingly reconciled themselves to this condition thinking it to be the decree of God.

One day Vehkannabhat finished his bath and worship. He then had a peep into the kitchen where it was all quiet on the western front. There was no fire in the oven.

V: 'Why! what is the mather?

S: 'Fate forbids me to prepare something to offer to God'

V: 'This need not cause anxiety in you.

God accepts with joy whatever you offer
Him lovingly, a leaf, a flower, a fruit or a
spoonful of water. All that is needed, is
a sincere offering; but we sadly lack in
sincerity. We do much for show'

S: 'But what to offer in sacred fire?'

V: 'A mental offering is as efficacious as material offering.' Saraswatibai could no longer bear. She burst into tears as is natural with sentimental women. But soon she suppressed it closing her lips tightly. With much self-restraint she continued the conversation thus

S: 'Even discourses on Vedanta cannot be continued without food' Venkanabhat knew the cause of her grief. Those who lived the life

of the body made much of food as a condition of life. While those who lived life of the spirit can gain mastery even over food and other necessities of life. He stole into meditation and light was thrown over the whole problem. Thus enlightened he came out with much relief and freshness. He said in a jovial mood:

V:- 'why! meditation is a healthy substitute for food. I know why you are so miserable. You are more anxious for the child than for either of us, who are both starving-That is the noble weakness of a loving mother. But shall I beg at the door of others for a little rice? God is there great and generous, bountiful and beneficientgrace alone saves us. We cannot and should not beg others who are dependents like our selves. This is the teaching of the Vedas. Ours is to think and meditate on Him and to do the deeds assigned to us by Shri Hari. What Hari gives is great and healthy to us-So teaches Madhya, the world teacher. There is nothing sinful or wrong if we beg God for the worldly necessities or even luxuries. We may pray to Him to save us

from the ills of life. He will accede to our prayers. Kuchela sought the help of Krishna and offered him a handful of fried rice, so that the kind Lord should enable him to keep the wolf from the door. For power, Dhruva worshipped him and performed austere penance. When his life was in danger Gajendra cried piteously to him All these three were heard and their payers were granted. As for Kuchela, he was embrached by Lord Krishna. Rukmini spared no efforts to make his stay happy. Kuchela thought of his pinching poverty which was cutting him deep into his marrows. He returned home saying "really how gracious was the Lord? For he condescended to tlak to me. He favoured me with a royal welcome. He did well in refusing to grant me wealth and comfort. For that would have led me astray. How kind of Him!" Thus thinking he came to his cottage, and found that he was given fabuluus wealth and a rich mansion. Devasharma Prayed to Shriniyasa that he would shower the most chosen gifts upon those who remembered him even through ignorance or innocence, under pretext or pride, or pressed by poverty or starvation.

Even when all these stand before us as testimony to his generous and compassionate nature, we refuse to remember Him with gratitude even for a moment. He has taken responsibility of feeding birds of feathers in the air and fish in the water and even frogs in the inacessible hollow in the rock. Does he refuse to look after us? Only our prayer should rise from our heart in all sincerity and faith. We go to the length of blaming Him for our calamities which befall us as the result of our sinful offences in the past. Really if we do not realise the auspicious and beneficient qualities in Him, we are in no way better than beasts. Creator Brahma in all humility has praised the Lord, attributing to himself all sins and moral lapses which can never contaminate him. The high souled Vijayeendra humbly confesses before the Lord that human beings through arrogance forget Him and attribute to themselves all good quilities of Hari, throuh vanity. Thus, as Venkannabhat was saving, he fell into raptures and loudly cried with humble submission "I cannot find among the sinful, and fallen lower than myself. You are the only succour whom I can depend upon. You are the redeemer of the sinful and the fallen. Oh Lord of the world, you are true to your title."

Saraswtibai found her husaband in deep trance. She had horripilation bristling on her body. She blamed herself for complaining for bread before yogies of high order like her husband. When he woke up she fell at his feet and begged him to pardon her for having exceeded the limits of decency.

They both subjected themselves to starvation taking kindly to it as it was the sweet will of Hari. For many days in a year kitchen fire in the house of Venkannabhat was not lighted. Though, the eleventh day (Yekadashi) of fasting came once in a fortnight in the calender it came many a time in his house.

Fate pursued closely at his feet and to test his moral strength and character more and more difficulties beset his part. But Venkannabhat rose to the occasion and stood undaunted in all his faith and conviction of divine help. One day at day break as usual Saraswatibai rose from her bed and attended to her daily routine. But she was surprised to find that her broken pots and torn clothes had disappeard. Slowly pushing aside the door, the thieves had entered into the house and had bolted away with the poor possessi ons of the inmates. Quite dismayed at this the poor wife came and stood silent at the feet of her

husband. He got up from his bed uttering the names of Hari. She silently bowed as usual and stood dejected.

Venkannabhat did not know the theft in his house. He thought the wife was standing there to make her daily complaints of scarcity in the house. So he begany-

V: When you have choosen to share the life of a poor man, how can you be happy?"

Saraswatibai did not like to break the news of theft in her house and calmly answered the question of her husband.

S: I think this is the happiest part of my life.

V: How can you be happy when you are subjected to inuman suffering?

S: This suffering is nothing to me How lucky I am? Is any one blessed like me? I fear if only I would come up to your level of sacrifice and devotion

V: This is just the way you women humour men.

S: I am not given to flatter. This is a fact that everyday a new good quality in you is revealed to me. How can a little woman like me measure the height and fathom the depth of a noble soul like you?

V: Let that go for the present.

- S: I feel constrained even to expose my feelings. I betray my littleness when I claim my husband as my exclusive property; For my husband is an abode of vast and deep knowledge, unparalleled devotion, fully dedicated to religion and God. I gave vent to my feelings only under the indulgent thought that you are mine. Please forgive me. I do not like to pull legs down to clay, when your head is high in the sky. But I am really to blame.
- V: My knowledge is as poor as poverty itself. It is only the grace of that gracious Lord-You find devotees who have fully hitched their waggon to the great Spirit. Yet how humble and meak and how absorbed are they in the meditation of Shri Hari! But look to me! How idly I am spending my time. There is a great thirst in me to study more of Shastras; and thus realise the undisputed sovereignty of the Lord. But I do not know the path-way to these.
- S: Of course I am too incompetent to advise you in such things. But if I place before you what I honestly feel I hope it would not be out of place.

- V: I do welcome suggestions from all quarters You need not feel any constraint
- S: The Swami's camp is quite near. In such a place..........
- V: What a happy suggestion it is! You have spoken out exactly what was in my mind. That is why I think there is harmony and good understanding between us.

Saraswatibai thanked herself that she was so richly complimented by her husband. She thought God was merciful and kind in giving such a companion of her life. She then said "It seems my master is inclined to put me to an acid test. When I got up in the morning I found the house empty. For all the thigs were taken away by the thieves."

- V: This is really surprising! Ah it is right! Ah it is right! It is she sweet will of God! When we are under his protection, we need not fear anything. Let everything go except his compassionate look!
- S: "This body which is the tenement of the sweet soul is subjected to starvation. What should be done?" For the last three days they both had no meals. To add fuel to fire

there was theft. After thinking for a moment something flashed on his mind and he said with a light smile playing upon his lips:"Why now? You have suggested a beautiful idea. God has revealed it to me through you, But what are you going to do?"

S: Why! I have no independent existence. How can I remain without you? I cannot forego even for a moment, your interesting and inspiring discourses on Shastras. Your sweet voice and your sweeter song soothe my troubled mind. Please take me along with you wherever you go."

CAAPTER V

Venkannabhatta's stay in the Mutt opened up a new chapter in his history. He stayed at Kumbhakonam. He lived there under the benign care and protection of Shri Sudheendra Swami under whose motherly tending, the personality of of Venkannabhat bloomed into full growth, seeing which Swamiji felt a satisfaction of having done his duty.

When he met the Swamiji alone he told him why he had approached him. The Swamiji was very glad to know that a distinguished disciple approached him for study. He made every arrangement for his stay and carefully looked after his convenience and comfort.

Then Swamiji found his disciple eager and earnest and chose the very next day for beginning his study. The Swamiji was traditionally trained in the Shastras and he followed the method which had been tested and improved by teachers like Jayateerth, Vibhudhendra and Vyasaraya and newly adopted by Vijayeendra, his direct Guru Now Venkannabhat the most versatile genious was the pupil to be taught. You can just imagine the standard of teaching lessons in different branches of Shastras every day. Lessons in

Vyakarana, Meemansa, Nyaya and Vedanta were begun simultaneously Lessons were not conducted during limited period of time. Lessons ware continued till either of them showed signs of exhaustion.

Venkannabhat had a teaching course also opened to him. Different groups of students approached him at differnt times and were given lessons in different branches of Shastras. Thus both by teaching and studying he gaind knowledge which stood him in good stead throughout his life.

The Swamiji had his usual religious circuits and Venkannabhat followed the Mutt. He toured round the Choladesha. This Country was rendered holy bathed by the river Kaveri. Climate was salubrious. Cool breezes spread the fragrance of flowers on all sides The fertile lands were richly covered with green crops. The country was full of Agrahars or Colonies of pious Brahmins dovoted to Vedic studies. Inspite of invasions of foreigners which had up set cultural traditions and social customs, the ancient culture of Vedic times had still a firm hold on the minds of the people. Every Agrahar had about thousand families and every house was marked out by the presence of pandits Education was imparted as a religious obligation and an honourable profession.

The torch of knowledge shouldbe handed overfrom generation to generation. This sense of duty had turned every house into a school and children were taught free there. Under the fostering care of such teachers children developed good character and social habits also. They were also initiated into religious rites and ceremonies.

Shri Sudheendra Teertha was accorded a hearty welcome wherever he went. In the course of his tour he reached Rajamannaragudi where dwelt an Advaita Sanyasi with many disciples under him. Both the Sanyasees met together and they fell into discussions on topics from the Shastras. Shastras were kept alive by dialectical discussions. Students were taught Shastras in the form of discussions. These debates were well organized and arranged systematically.

Discussions are called Katha and it is of three types. In Vada type of discussion both the parties are engaged with the main object of knowing things. This earnest and honest desire to know shapes and moulds, the discussions under the guidance of Judges and mediators, are bound by rules and regulations controlling discussion. The discussion develops in the form of questions and answers. Random talk, indignant vituperations, and breach of rules of Katha are not tolerated

The other two types are merely to flout the foe and discomfit him.

Venkannabhat opened the discussion on Adwaitawada.

- V: Sire! What evidence can you adduce to prove the identity of the soul and Brahma?
- S: As every thing other than Brahman is illusory and false, Jeeva and Brahman are one and identical
- V: This does not amount to adducing evidence in respect of identity.
- S: Now you cannot use correct gramatical formsyou used কি বাব: which is no where used-Its usage is not found either in grammar or literature I think you have coined this word.
- V: This accusation clearly proves your ignorance of Mahabhashya. For the form is used in Mahabhashya.

This repartee of the opponent called forth vociferous clamourings from the world of disciples one of whom asked him unceremoniously to keep quiet. He said Mahabhasya was too big a morsel for his little mouth. The point that was pressed was how that word which Venkannabhat used, was derived He accused Venkannabhat of sidetracking and vaunting

Now Venkannabhat quoted Mahabhasya line by line and proved that the word he had used was there in Mahabhasya

Another disciple in a taunt called him a Pandit and asked him a particular form of a root which, Venkannabhat anwsered before the question had ended and in return asked the disciple another form of the same root. He was not so well versed in grammar; besides the question was unexpected and hence he was shocked beyond recovery. Even his Guru could not answer the question and the discussion ended abruptly.

The Swamiji who detachedly watching all this, was happily surprised at the high level of his disciple's erudition. He knew Venkannabhat to be an intelligent student but he had no idea about his skill in conducting polemical discussion, about his deep study of Shastras and his way of talking smilingly even when the opponent was enraged and tried to hit him below the belt. The Swamiji did not know that he was so well acquianted with Mahabhashya which he was studying with Swamiji. So he openly recognized Venkannabhat's deep Scholarship in Grammar. He said-"Venkannabhat! We are highly pleased with your proficiency in Vyakarana. It seems Shri Madhava who was a master in the Vyakarana

Shastra has also blessed you We have, in recognition of this merit conferred upon you the title of "Mahabhashyacharya". Venkannabhat fell at the feet of the Swamiji and humbly accepted the reward as blessing. Hence forward Venkanna bhat began to be called Mahabhashyacharya Venkannabhat.

His fame spread far and wide. The Swamiji thought he was an asset to the Mutt. The Swamiji after a successful tour came back to Kumbhakonam. The Mutt was now popular as Vidya Mutt (Mutt devoted to knowledge) and Venkannabhat was its distinguished Pandit.

How happy Venkannabhat was! But he knew very well, pleasure or pain, victory or defeat, happiness or unhappiness were to be accepted in the right spirit. For they were both the decrees of God and Venkannabhat received them with the same spirit of resignation. There was neither depression at pain nor elation at pleasure. His soul rested in the energising sun-shine of the spirit, not at all disturbed by the blasts of the stormy winds. His composed and sedate, equipoise was now the permanent disposition of the mindwhich had passed through the fiery ordeal of miscry and pain in the slender days of scarcity. Now it was going through another kind of test.

The happy days did not affect the settled mind which was fully absorbed in the sweet Union with God enjoying that togetherness and guarding it in great jealosy.

The Vidya Mutt now received an invitation from the Court of Tanjore Naik. So the Swamiji went there in state pomp. There at the Court of Tanjore was one Yajna Narayan Dixit, who was a pandit of great reputation and distinguished scholar in Meemansha. He had written a learned commentry on the Silba Sutras. He paid a courtsey call on the Swamiji. After the usual question of mutual well-being the Dixit tured to Venkannabhat and congratulated him on his extra-ordinary attainment of proficiency in Vyakarana. He expressed his pleasure to have met him, though by chance (He used the word Kaka Teleeya for "by chance".)

Venkannabhat just requested him to explain "Kaka Taleeya" grammatically. Venkannabhat beat the Dixit quite hollow in the various explanations he put forth proving their inadequacy or incorroctness by the rules of grammar He showed the unsatisfactory nature of the definitions even offered by the exegesis of ancient commentators, so that the lerned pandits and poets that had gathered there were nonplused.

The assembly met again in the afternoon; and the topic of discussion was the burning topic of the day "receiving hot marks on the body with heated mudras or metal marks of Vishnu". Dixit argued that burning the body with heated marks of Vishnu was against the injunctions of Veda Venkannabhat refuted all these arguments He finally said that the branded mark was necessary to get eligibility of a candidate for release or Mukti and reprodeed many quotations from Chakra Meemansha of Shri Vijayeendra Teertha. The Dixit really acknowledged the vast erudition and scholarship of Venkannabhat- He was glad to find his learning was very deep and honoured him with special gifts.

CHAPTER VI

Venkannabhat was now in the hay-day of his prosperity and fame Mutt bore all his expenses and he no longer felt the pinches of poverty. Life of misery and searcity was a past history which he remembered only to feel grateful to God for the present happy days. So pysical cares and worries had stopped their pricks on his impervious spiritual being. His ambition to become a distinguished Pandit was richly fulfilled and his fame spread in all directions. He was a terror to the world of Pandits and was known as a keen debater and a profound controversialist. He had ample scope to present, before the intelligentsia the profound truths which Madhava had propounded and preached. Whenever he had an opportunity he would prove thier Vedic legacy, Logical soundness and spiritual efficacy. At the same time he would expose the hollowness of Shankara's Adwaitavada and its dissension from Vedic trdition. He would prove to the hilt that all the Vedas had one import that Narayana is the supreme Reality who is not a spiritual vacuum but a sweet harmonization of all contradictions, and hence an impersonal personality, possessor of attributes not essentially dtfferent from him, related to the world and yet

absolutely independent of it. He is one and many and yet never divided and never exhausted. Souls though similar are yet categorically different from Him. Unity is there in the being of that supreme reality. But that unity tolerates the existence of other realities binding them all into a tie of dependence. So the greatest trait of this reality is independence, and the keenest trait that divides other things from that reality is dependence. Venkannnbhat proved all this quoting profusely from the Vendas

Epestomology and ontology of Shankar were citically examined by him before the learned pandits who were convinced how they were logically unsound, and interpretationally untenable. He showed how Shankar as a consequence of upstart philosophy had to fall foul of great Vedic teachers like Vyasa and Badarayan.

Vehkannabhat had now the satisfaction of having done some service to Madhva But this was not of permanent nature. These discussions will be forgotten, for nobody takes care to preserve them. He must contribute to Dwaita literature in the form of original commentaries or glosses on the commentaries of Jayateerth.

By such critical notes Venkannabhat would be able to revive correct interpretation wherever he finds that there is mishandling Details are succintly summarised, pithy statements are elucidated and enlarged and the text is made easy to understand. Besides, honest new interpretations are recognised and impostors are exposed. New objections are met with squarely and the controversy is quelled in favour of Dwaitasidhant.

So Venknnabhat thought of writing works. They would remain as long as the divine tongue would remain. In his days Sanskrit was no longer the language of the mass; perhaps it was never so. It had been the language of the few learned; and Venkannabhat was sure that it would ever remain the language of national culture. So he determined to take to writing.

An humble beginning was thought to be advisible. Great men often feel unwarranted defidence. They are not aware of their potential powers. Though Venkannabhat chose to be exponent of Madhva and Jayateerth, yet to begin with such a work would be preposterous on his part. So he chose an humbler work of Narayana Panditacharya, Anu Madhva Vijaya, for elucidation. Madhavijaya is a work in 16 cantoes Each canto is abridged into a single verse, a couplet. Venkannabhat explains how the whole meaning of the canto is stuffed into a single verse.

So his maiden attempt was devoted to elucidate a narrative poem depicting the pure and noble life of Shri Madhava This brought him great fame in the world of writers in Sanskrit, This is the only work he wrote before he took holy orders. All his works belong to his Post-Sanyasa period. Shri Vadeendra-Teerth in his Guruguna-stavana says-"Madhva being pleased with his learned commentary on his life-history of conquest, honoured him with a place among his pontifical heads, and even the deity of speech (Vagdevi) being pleased with his way of enlogising her Lord crowned Venkannabhat a king in the kingdom of Vedanta".

So it is clear that this is the only work that belongs to Pre-Sanyasa period. Therefore the contention of some that Shri. Raghavendra wrote Parimala in his Pre-Sanyasa days is a baseless story.

Now he proposed to himself to write a monumental work. Shri. Madbva has written Bhashya on the first three Adhyayas of Rigveda. His plea that Rigved had an esoteric meaning beside the connotational meaning, was found a sound one and Venkannabhat was very much fascinated by the new interpretation. For so long Veda had been interpreted as prayers of different deities to

be used in sacrfice. Yaska no doubt had recognisd the fact that all names of different gods were the names of one God. But there was no attempt to interpret the whole of the Vedas as having the main import of describing Vishnu" with all his auspicious qualities Madhva took up 1 this heavy task and showed successfully this esteric import of the Vedas, besides the theological or literugical interpretation sacrificial application. Hence this interpretation of Madhva did not upset Vedic Theology or Ritualism. Yet Madhya showed that Vedas throughout described the supremacy of Narayana. who created the manifould world and entered into it. He manifested himself in innumerable forms in all the things he created. Through them he fulfilled the destiny of creation. This philosophy is possible only when Vedas are esoterically interpreted to mean Narayan and his fulfilment of his will

Accordingly it is said that Raghavendra wrote piece meal notes or Khandartha on the three Vedas as he worte such notes on Upanishads which are now available. But these notes on the Vedas are not available. It is said that they are to be found in some German Libraries and there is an attempt to get them copied out. The day on

which we get the Vedic notes of Raghavendra restored to India will be a golden day. For they will open up new avenues of Vedic research

But for the present, we are to be satisfied with hiis Mantrartha Manjari or notes on the Rigbhashya of Madhva. Shri Arabindo Ghosha great savant of Indology has recognised the merit of Mantrartha Manjari in Vedic interpretation.



CHAPTER VII

At that time events of historical importance were happening in the Vidya Mutt. A man who was disgusted with worldly life and had an intense desire to live the life of the spirit thought of taking holy orders and appraoched Shri Sudhindra Swami. He tested the man and found him fit for Sanyasa. Accordingly he was created an ordinary monk under the name of Yadavendrawho, it seems, was not intended to succeed as pontifical head. As a special favour he was blessed with an idol from the Mutt for daily worship. Then Yadavendra went on his religious tours.

One day Sudheendra Swami in his dream was ordered to choose Venkannabhat as his successor to worship Mula Rama. Accordingly the Swamiji called him and was closetted with him for a long time. After a preliminary talk the Swamiji directly opened the topic. He tried to convince Venkannabhat that he was gifted with deep scholarship in all shastras and had an inclination towards detachment and renunciation. His intense devotion and attachment to Mula-Rama had given him a special qualification for Sanyasa. His commentary on Anumadhva Vijaya had pleased Shri Madhva and he had now offered

Venkannabhat an opportuity to get this covetuous post of the Swamiji of Vidya Mutt. There was no other man better qualified than Venkannabhat.

Venkannabhat expressed his deep indebtedness to the Swamiji for the special blessings he had showered on him. He knew very well that but for Swamiji's fostering care and parental affection he would not have been able to enjoyall. these special favours. It was Swamiji who had raised him from abject poverty to a life of luxury in which he had enough and to spare. It was Swamiji who had initiated him into the complex subtleties of Shastras and had given him scope to develop an all-round scholarship. It was he who had showd. Venkannabhat, the road, to fame, and had encouraged him to foster and develop skill in " dialectical discussions. So it was no surprise when Venkannabhat said that he was deeply indebted to Swamiji for what he was

Yet Venkannabhat flatly refused to arrogate to himself that eligibility which would qualify him to stand in line with Jaya-Teerth. Vibhudhendra-Teertha Vijayeendra and the present Swamiji Sudheendra-Teertha. He was convinced that he was a very small man and a pigmy before those intellectual giants and spiritual light houses. Even when he stretched his imagination he could

not think of becoming a swami without ridiculing whimself as the second

When Swamiji further pressed him with persuasion and personal interest, Venkannabhat had to flatly refuse to take up Sanyasa. Because his mind was still attached to worldly life and lures. It was not still ready to get rid of the fascinating charms; for he was enmeshed deeply in the pleasures of married life. His wife was young and the only son had not his thread ceremony performed. He confessed plainly that he could not renounce the worldly pleasures as he could not sever the ties of affection and love. He could not even imagine how he could live alone without his wife and child even for an hour. Under these circumstances Sanyasa was suicidal to him.

Now Sudheendra was deeply convinced that he was even spiritually advanced and it was only a temparary smoke that had enveloped his spirit creating infatuation and fondness. If the inner spirit were allowed to blaze furiously the smoke would be dispelled in no time, so that pure consciousness wold burn in its native light, He described to Venkannabhat the prospective unalloyed delight and joy of the life of the spirit compared with which the worldly pleasures were

evanescent, mixed with racking pains, ending in insatiety and dejection He did not press these words too much fearing resentment and repulsion. He spoke softly and touchingly with affection and sincerity. He said "Venkannabhat! You are a learned man knowing the subtle secrects of Madhva philosophy which is more meant to live than to dabble with. Detachment and renunciation are not new things to you. But we are your spiritual well wishers and therefore we wish to guide you Everyone is after happiness, for himself and children Property, money, rank and respect make a man happy. There is nothing wrong in that. But if you are engaged in getting the means of happiness throughout your life, when are you going to be happy?

Our ambition is not limited to wife and children and name and fame. It goes on hankering after more and fame the more you satisfy it So we must put a stop to these enticing pleasures and seek higher values in life which lands us on the life of the spirit Self resraint, self-sacrifice, and self surrender qualify you to enter the land of spirit. Madhva has shown that unflinching devotion is the path way to God.

You can live as householder and realise the spiritual life. But that is meant for comman people. You are a man specially gifted with spiritual awakening which is clouded for the moment. Men of special merit and spiritual rank like you should courageously take to Sanyasa which affords unlimited scope for service of man and God. Your ambition is to write piece-meal notes to Vedas and Upanishads and to all the works of Jayateerth. This is really a stupendous task before you, calling forth sacrfice of every type, renuiciation of pleasures and undivided dedication to it. Look to glorious tradition that have come to us Was not Madhva ayoung stripling! Was Jayateerth a poor pauper? He was an only son to his father. He was in the prime of having all the prospects of happiness pleasure. He was newly married. It was just the day of his nuptials. Yet he rejected all this and accepted Sanyasa. Why? for he could not stand the call of the inner spirit. It was the native urge to make advntures into the lands of the spirit. Considering these glorious instances you must accept Sanyasa. For, you had your days of pleasures: you have a son and no property to disown "

"You still want to spend your precious time in these vile and wretched pursuits, worshipping muntruth as truth and declaring illiberality as fliberality, ugliness as beauty, selfishness as sacrifice, mand ignorance as knowledge. This flourishes in the world under the name of worldly wisdom and stact. God has given to you an opportunity to stand boldly for God, truth, and service. Being Sanyasi you need not mince matter under any pressure Now you being the chosen, do not fight shy; Awake, arise and the goal is very near to you. These words of the Swamiji lifted the veil over his mind. But it revealed to him a wild Socean, turbulent with mountain like waves lashing and roaring in all fury and force. He was caught the vortex of the whirl-wind and left completely to the mercy of the furious storm. He came home with his mind steeped in anarchy, confusion and imbalance to correct which he had lost all control and resources. He intellectual vigour, his emotional integrity and his unflinching devotion had left him to his own fate. Any wordinary soul would have been crushed under this conflict leaving him a mental wreck and a physical destitute Venkannabhat was a mau of esterner stuff physically and spiritually spiritual exercises, in former births, his dedication

and surrender to God, his god realisation.— all stood him in good stead in this moral crisis. This clearly shows that all souls in spiritual scale are subjected to temporary infatuation even after god-realisation before they get the final beautitude. It is again the grace of Narayana that saves them from this inadvertant tumbling.

Now Venkannabht was an extraordinary soul of spiritual eminence. His services and devotion were recognised in the spiritual world. Prahlad was a star of unusual brilliance on the horizon of devotional history. Vyasaraya his second incarnation bulked large in the history of Sanskrit scholorship and Indian Philosophy Such disting uished eareers of his in the past cannot but leave deep impressions on the spiritual heritage of Shri Raghavendra, which is said to be the third incarnation of Prahlad.

When Venkannabhat went home the thought of Sanyasa haunted his mind like a rightmare. He was a reverse of Arjuna. Arjuna wanted to take Sanyasa and Krishna advised him to remain a house-holder, as a Kshatriya, and fight the war to a finish While Raghavendra wanted to remain a house holder and the Swamiji admonished him to take Sanyasa. In both the cases the reason for admonishing was that each one was peculiarly

fitted to lead a house-holder's life or a Sanyasa life Arjuna was fitted to do the duty of a Kshatriya and yet tried to follow the path for god-realisation. Here Raghavendra was pressed to take holy orders for spiritual realisation. Both did not understand their particular eligibility and hence underwent the mental conflict, and torture.

Venkannabhat thought for himself-should one be a recluse to realise oneself? Cannot a house-holder attain salvation living an honest life of a house-holder? There is nothing impossible in this? Besides I have a very amiable and loving wife. But suppose I discard the words of Swamiji and go to my village. Then how to maintain myself and my family. Oh! that abominable dependance on others! If not, what is the alternative? God is great and kind. He has extended his protection even when I was hard pressed by scarcity and poverty. Why should I seek parasitic dependence on others? Then to become an ascetic? No! No! What of beloved Saraswati? Where should she go? What about my pretty little son Laxmi-Narayan? Who is there to look after them? Why should I bother my self with these worries and anxieties , when there is Shri Hari to whom I have completely surrendered? But do I get ample scope to realise my ambition in a house holder's life? In this Kali age scepticism rules at large questioning even the existence of God. Worse days are expected ahead. The purpose of coming into the cycle of birth will be fulfilled only by proving and convincing the existence of God. That is the great service of Bhagavan."

"There is still the stupendous task of interpreting and elucidating Vedas strictly following the standard canons of interpretation in contravention of wrong interpretations. Then what is a better course open to me? Life of a house holder? Oh no! For a seeker and a student, a quiet life of Sanyasa is more congenial than house-holder's life. Besides it is a stage in life which is very dear to God Narayana. Good company should be assiduously sought severing all ties of wordly life, steeped in ignorance. Solitary life dedicated to meditation has its own pleasures. Unreserved surrender to Hari's will make our journey pleasant"

"But Saraswati, I cannot leave her! To go from here is to invite the dreadful curse and wrath of Guru upon me If I remain here Sanyasa stares in my face." To be or not to be is the question of Raghavendra. Venkannabhat thought that was an ordeal pre-planned by Hari.

At long last being tossed between these two poles he felt exhausted and proposed that God's will might be done.

The dejection and depression of his mind did not go unnoticed by his wife Saraswati. Women folk's gossip had set this news affoat and Saraswatibai had smelt it in the air. When she knew it for the first time it was a shock to her. She fell unconscious on the ground. No body was there to give her first aid or medical treatment. After sometime she herself woke up and sat on the ground. She felt an aching pain in all her limbs. She had forgotten all about her husband's Sanyasa.

Gradually the news of Sanyasa again crept into her mind and captured it for some time. At last she fully realised what had happened and knew that apprehension of separation from her husband had inflicted such a stunning blow upon her that she had fallen unconscious, She did not know why fate had brought her to the brink of imminent calamity. But it was she, who had encouraged her husband, to try to get succession to Guru peeth as it would give him scope to realise his dreams. Now it proved to be daggars to her heart as it threatened to crush all her hopes of future happiness. She could not imagine

how to live without seeing the face of her hnsband, without the pleasant talk with him. She had become uneasy and anxious when only he was late by a few minutes in coming to the house. Just a shadow of sorrow and dejection on his face had caused her agony of the worst sort. Her face had beamed with joy to hear her husband praised to the skies. The very idea of separation from him had caused her excruciating pain. What would then be the effect of actual separation? She had felt the kingdom of heaven had descended to the earth for her when she had intently pored on his charming and lovely face. She had spent hours and hours by night when he was asleep enjoying this pastime of gazing on his face. She did not know why Fate had decreed such a calamity on her. She would say to herself— "Whom have I offended? Whose happy life have I soured by my misdeeds? Had I been so sinful how could I have got such a husband? Is this the reward for worshipping him as God incarnate? I sacrificed every thing for his happiness. feelingly he would talk to me when he came home?"

All the sweet moments in her past life passed before her as if in a Kaleidoscope Her marriage. her first day with her husband, the birth of Laxminarayan and many others. This tossing between joy and grief, pleasure and pain, exhausted her and threw her in utter confusion. She did not know who would help her out of this mental agony. She felt she was alone in the wilderness and tears pooled in her eyes and roled down her cheeks like a river in spate. She did not know how long she had wept At last she sat motion less and muttering to herself that God gave her a stone when she asked Him for bread.

CHAPTER VIII

Just by this time Venkannabhat entered the house. She saw his care-worn and harrowed face, dejected and down-cast appearance, and could gather up her courage to talk to him. As usual he did not talk to his wife but went into his study and sat reading. The struggle and indicision in his mind, and the excruciating grief of his wife made the silence terribly unbearable to both. Yet mute conversation went on between the two minds, silence being more eloquent medium than vocal expression. So both went to sleep without breaking the silence.

The oscillation at last merged itself into the ever-flowing current of his thinking about the fundamental questions of life. Just reclining on his bed he thought "what is this? what is the secret of life? Why could I not accept the most beneficient advice of my Guru who sincerely seeks my welfare. Whence comes this infatuating ignorance which is at the basis of the wordly life? Naturally grief is the consequence of this basic nescience. How to get rid of it? Gita unambiguously arrived at the conclusion that detachment and self-surrender is the discipline required to get free from this cosmic nescience.

To be completely enmeshed in worldly pleasures is the road to hell. To be in the midst of them yet not to be affected by them is the best way of self-realisation The constant thought of wife and children leads us no where. On the other hand the constant meditation of Hari, who had been in all our sojourns, our unfailling companion standing by us in storm and stress, does lead to emancipation from ignorance and bondage." This meditation was attended with the current of love and all-absorbing devotion to Hari Suddenly a light coming from a long distance flashed upon his memory which projected pictures of distant past. A child who was going round and round himself singing the sweet names of Hari in complete forgetfulness; Sanvasi bending low at the feet of Venkatesh were marked out by him. But soon it was swallowed up in sleep which again opened into the magic land of dream.

In his dream he was standing with the king himself, in the presence of all courties. Men in the court turned pale with fear at his audacity in exposing the mean behaviour of the King. Boldly he called the King to get down from the throne. He said that the so called king on the throne was not the real king. The real king was in heaven above, in the world below, in the king on the

throne, in him who challanged the king The king on the throne was burning with indignation at the insult. The person on whose behalf had challenged the king descended in a terrible form to the earth dragged down the king from the throme and killed him

This was not a dream but a memory of the history. The life-connection that has been cut off so long had been restored. The name of Shri Hari was echoing and re-echoing even in his bones. The dream was a self-revelation to Venkannabhat. So he was highy delighted.

It was now 4 O'clock in the morning; and yet the room was flooded with heavenly light. Greatly amazed he got up from his bed and sat upon it. Just by his pillow a woman with a hallow of heavenly glow was sitting. He was struck dumb at the sight of a woman near his bed. Feelings of joy, fear and wonder rose simultaneously in his mind. He could not speak at all. He sat looking with wondering eyes and mouth agape, at the divine form of a woman. He wondered if she were a Yaksha or a Kinnari or a Nagakannika. At last he left her to herself and sat dazed and dumb.

Really the presence was super - human. She was more briliant than the rays of the sun, yet as

cool as moon light. Broad forehead, elongated and flaming eyes, black pupils, acquiline nose, a small mouth with tigot lips, though slendar in body yet robust and round in her figure, herbraid of hair hanging down like a cobra, ornaments heightening the beauty of the body-all these produced grace and elegance, divine in quality; The spell it cast was more awakening than infatuating She graciously looked at Venkannabhat to ease him from his bewi'derment and slowly in her silver voice spoke to him "Oh learned Brahmin, I am the goddess of learning. It was Vedavyasa. who created me to entertain the learned. I am very dear to Anandateerth Veda is the abode of my glory; but it was misinterpreted by others. He not merely gave out it right interpretation but made the celestil cow Brahma milk the sweet meaning with which he fed me when I was young. Tikacharya filled me with youthful energy. Vyasaraja was a real Emperor. For worldly emperors stood at his door to be blessed with his gracious look. He took me under his benign protection. He wrote Nyayamrita Tarka Tandava and Chandrika and provided me with a palatial mansion to reside and theatrical stage to dance upon. When I see you I find a close affinifity between him and you. I was in search of a mate and companion, a fuli blooded Vijayeendra was found suitable to be my The tender creeper Nayayamrita was mate. very dear to me! He wrote a commentary called Amoda on that. How can I forget the help he so generously renerously me. Kantakodhara is a saree of nice texture and fine colour which he gave me. I do not need any other pearl necklace when I am adorned with Nyaya Mauktikamala. I only wanted a good bex to keep it in, which he readily supplied me by writing Tatwamanikyapeti There were many other books which filled the place of other ornaments. Your teacher Shri Sndheendra supplied me the stage(Rangasthanam) for my peformance. His illuminating commentary on Bhagavata gave a heavenly glint to all my ornaments Still there was nothing to adorn my forehead. Subhadra parinaya was the befitting ornament for my forehead, swaying loosely at the division of hair

It is Chndri that supplies me with life-blood. But that creeper is being eaten by insects and its roots are affected. What is the use of other ornaments when my life itself is in danger? Now you can save me from this crisis. You write a commentary on Chandrika and save it from the attacks of others. My life is at your

disposal If you do not give me protection I shall stay with your Guru for two years more and then I shall be helpless if you reject me. I shall be always with those who worship Mula Rama. Therefore kindly you agree to take holy orders, Venkannaphat! Do not hesitate to be a Sanyasin fearing you should lose all. I am there thelp you in critical times If you reject the offer of Sanyasa, the Vaishnava tradition will be threatend with extinction"

"In former ages you led the Vaishnava tradition because you were very dear to Lord Vishnu, and you were blessed with 'God vision'. This tradition smoothly continued till it fell on evil days at the time of Prajna Teerth who showed great courage in protecting it. Then it. reached its climax at the time of Ananda Teertha: and it had asmooth sailing till the pressent times. The time is very critical and if you do not rise to the occasion it is sure to fall down, being set aside by more attractive ways of life Just imagine how wretched would be the condition of society. Silly talk would take the place of intelligent discussions of Shastrss. These books of Shastras left uncared, would be eaten up by moths and rats Once the tradition is lost it would take many centuries to build it again."

"Now materialistic tendencies will thrive most and people will be engaged only in getting and spending. Their atheistic inclination would have a society without religion. Their means of knowledge would be only perception or direct experience and reasoning. Vedas will be set aside as an old woman's tale. Then we require a man like you to preach people in such a manner as to reach their heart. They easily come under the spell of your great personality. They know the beauty of charity and joy of renunciation from you. Really you will have the credit of reviving religious tradition of Bhagavata Dharma and you will be preparing the ground for the coming of the great Mother Durga to establish religion. You are the most beloved of Vishnu and Madhva and hence this mission is assigned to you"

"At this time of the kali age righteous men are not getting the benefit of the incarnation of God. You alone can be of great help to them God has graciously decreed that those who seek your help could cross the ocean of life. How it is that you forget all this and rot in the slime of worldly life No! this does not befit a great devotee like you. Get up and know thyself Then you will realise how childish and silly is your dejection!"

"Now still the time is favourable. For yet there are good men following the Vaishnava tradition. Days of darkness are ahead and coming darkness has cast its shadow already on us. I tremble to think of the future days of irreligion impiety and ungodliness. Mutts will be turned into free chaultries and rest houses. Vedic recitations will be discontinued. Sacred places will be the houses for sankes and reptiles. They will be noisy with barkings and bryings of asses and dogs. The leaves of the sacred Books are dustbins. into Every where thrown pessimistic illusion theory will be a popular cult-Temples now illumined by resplendent lights become dismantled and by day, they are exposed to the hot rays of the sun, and by night, are haunted by owls and bats Men forget their spiritual heritage and lead a beastly life. To work for bread and butter will be the main occupation of an Keen competition would crush the soul mercilessly. Who can save the pious people from the ravages of these evil days? You alone can set the clock right. You take Sanyasa and be the head of the Mutt. By preaching and living the religion you teach, you can revive Vaishnava tradition. The ancient glory of spiritual life may thrive again. You can satisfy the intelligent by

discourses on Shastras. Piety and devotion will be restored to their former position in life. You can easily deal with doubts and objections. You can sway back the mass to believe in God by your inspiring talks, and by writing books. You can convince them of the endless and eternal powers and perfection of God. A house-holder's life will be a hindrance to your full devotion to the cause of revival of the spirit. Every pious deed done by a recluse yields fruit hundred times exercising thousand fold influence on society."

"The last but not the least idea that I wish to convey to you is that you are destined to be the successor of the present Swamiji. None can change the decree of God. I am destined to take resort to you If you reconcile yourself to the inevitable destiny, you will be blessing yourself and the world. Take heed of my words and act well your part."

Thus saying the divine figure whispered the sacred Mantra into his ears and disappeared. It is veary difficult to describe the state of mind of Venkannabhat He felt as it were, he recovered his lost eyesight after many years. The divine lustre, the fluent spontaniety of her speech, left an indelible impression on his mind. The sacred Mantra whispered into his ears removed all his

doubts. He just shut his eyes to ruminate over the exprience of the last night. He fell into a trance and had a clear vision of Rama, Narasimha Krishna and Vedavyasa. When he came out of the trance he had no inkling of doubt left in him. He had a clear revelation to him of his prosective spiritual career. Over-come with gratitude he bowed down on his be land unreservedly surrender ed himslf to divine dispensation and praised inconceivable ways His memory was awakened to deeply sub-merged expriences of Prahlad, exhorting the children of the Daityas to devotion and religious practices and Chandrikacharya's good advice to Vijayeendra. At last he thought it was best to abide by the decision of the Swamiji. He just cast a causal glanceat the face of his sleepting wife. Her face had become pale on account of sorr w and lamentation of the last night His tender heart melted to see her. subjected to painful excitement and mental agitation. He wrenched his eyes from her and never directed them again direction.

He got up from his bed and finished his morning routine By that time Saraswatibai had finished her work. She was not inclined to talk abou Sanyasa to him But one thing struck her and that her husband's face had no longer the vexed appearance of yesterday night. Instead his calm and composed countenance took her by surprise. The pleasant smile showed a permanent settlement deep below it. But this caused fear and anxiety in the mind of the wife. He seemed a man far beyond an earthly measure of estimation or appraisal. She felt instinctively that he could no longer remain hers.

Their usual pleasant ways, smiling exchange of glance and sunny wit and humour were all conspicuously absent that day. On the other hand Venkannaphat as if groaning under heavy responsibility was grave and serious; Saraswatibai was quiet and calm after much excitement and exhaustion. After his bath and worship he went hurriedly to Mutt The Swamiji was engaged still in his usual course of meditation counting beads. For Venkannabhat had come an hour earlier to Mutt; He fell at the feet of the Swamiji and stood up for his new imperatives. Swamiji looked up and found eagerness on his face to break some news. He earnestly asked his disciple whether he had considered his proposal and whether he had reached some decsion.

Venkannaphat looked on all sides to assure himself that none was there to share the secret

news to be revealed to the Swamiji. He begged pardon of the Swamiji for having lightly treated his advice and proposal of the previous day. Yet he was made aware of his destiny by VidyaLaxmi who blessed him at night. Then he narrated in brief the conversation they both had the night before. The Swamiji was simply surprised to hear this. This was very auspicious, forecasting a bright future of the holy life of Venkannabhat. For he was rendered unusually holy at the sight of divine presence of Shri Vagdevi on the eve of his Sanyasa grahana or acceptance of holy robes. So the Swamiji did not like to postpone this ceremony, any longer. He first asked Venkanna bhat to perform the upanayana ceremony of his son and blessed him with Mantrakshata

The eeremony was performed in all seriousness in due deference to the sacred function, yet the lightside of it was not neglected taking into consideration the sentiments of sensitive Saraswatibai. The swamiji himself graced the occasion and initisted the yong aspirant into the sacred rituals of Gayatri. But every act was tinged with a shade of sadness as Venkannabhat and his wife felt that, that was the last act to be performed by them both together.

Thus he was now ready for Sanyasa and the only hindrance was his wife Saraswatibai. Now Swamiji knew that Saraswatibai was very much attached to her husband and his Sanyasa was feared to hasten her death. He expected horrible scenes of crying and beating of breast if Sanyasa ceremony were to be performed at Kumbhakonam. So the Swamiji moved to Tanjore. The ruler Raghunath Bhupal took deep interest in the Mutt and felt high regard for the Swamiji. So the ceremony was arranged under his patronage in his court.

CHAPTER IX

Forestalling future trouble from Saraswatibai, the Swamiji went to Raghunath Bhupal who welcomed him with stately pomp. The Swamiji was put up in the royal palace where he performed his puja in befitting grandeur.

The news of giving holy orders to Venkanna bhat spread far and wide. Many pandits hurried to Tanjore to grace the occasion at the invitation of swamiji. It was settled to perform the ceremony on Phalguna, Shudha, Dwiteeya 1543 Shalivahan Shake (1621 A.D.)

That morning Venkannabhat went through all rites prior to taking holy orders; and when the auspicious moment came, Swamiji gave him Sanyasa and Coronation ceremony proceeded seating him in the grand Court of Raghunath Bhupal, attended with civil and military officers and Pandits and distinguished citizens As was hinted to him in his dream the Swamiji called him Raghavendra Teertha, and initiated him into Mantras usual and special. He introduced to sixtyfour arts of secular reputation Then he was acquai ted with Vedic Lore and secrets of Dwaita philosophy. He was then bathed with holy waters of the sacred rivers and was finally confirmed as the future head of the Mutt.

Then the Swamiji most solemnly exhorted Raghavendra on the occasion of his canonization, to realise his holy duty to himself and to his fold, with these words—"By the decree of God Hari, you have been included in the line of pontifical heads. The new name that was given to you was chosen by Hari Himself. Now you are in a very high position and you have onerous duties on your shoulders. In wealth you surpass Kuber. May you be beneficient to all, like Sri Rama. Be piously devoted to God, like my late grand Guru Surendrateerth. Get the fame of my great Guru Vijayeendra. May you be a terror in polemical discussions. Under your rule our Mutt would flourish and your name would be remembered as long as the Sun and the moon would shine in the sky. No doubt you will shine like a star on account of your penances and your accumilated religious merit. You will be a saviour and benefactor to mankind. May God Mula Rama to whom we are all dedicated shower all blessings on you." Tears fell in incessent courses from his eyes and down his cheeks. Now gratitude settled on the face of his disciple. The whole function was very touching and moved all to tears.

The king was elated with joy and was overcome with sentiments so much, that he fell

at the feet of the old and the new Swamiji, again and again, thinking himself very fortunate to have witnessed these solemn functions The whole of the assembly cheered lustily.

Shri Sudheendra Swami handed over charge of the Mutt to Raghavendra. In doing so he handed over the following which formed the marks of the head-monk of the Mutt. Mula Rama, Digvijaya Rama, and Jaya Rama (These are idols to be worshipped by the head-monk), Two of the shapes of sands pressed in the fist (अग्रम्मिड्ट:) both given to Madhva by Shri Vedavyas works on Vedanta, two chauries. white umbrella Sahanai Mela, golden Palanquin and others. These constitute the spiritual insingnia of the head-monk of the Mutt and Raghavendra received them in all solemnity.

Shri Sudheendra Swami was highly pleased to see his disciple devotly worshipping the Lord and to hear the learned discourses every day. He blessed Raghavendra Teertha heartily and started on a journey to the North. He stayed for some time on the banks of Tungabhadra near the Brindavan of the Guru's Guru, Chandrikacharya and in 1623 he breathed his last and approached the feet of Lord Krishna.

The news of her husband's acceptance of Sanyasa came to her like a bolt from the blue. At the stuning blow she fell unconscious. After some time she came to herself when no body attended on her. She get up and consoled herself,

She was already initiated into the teachings of Vedic literature and tradition. For she had intelligently followed them in the daily discourses of her husband. Detachment and disinterested work was streseed upon in Geeta and that had appeald to her most. She had learnt this lesson while serving her husband. Without expecting any return, she had learnt lo love him sweetly and serve him ungrudgingly.

She also remembered many reasons given by the Shastras, to allay the pangs of her grief. Moreover she must be proud of her husband for his unique position of the head of the Mutt. This was the recognition of his spiritual as well as temporal merit. She thought she must now take to penance and piety in a mood of renunciation. But all these consolations did not alliviate the grief of her soul. The future of her life entirely depended upon her husband and when he was not available to her, why should she continue to live at all? When even the sight of her husband was denied to her, life had no charm for her,

Living even for a moment more without her husband was unbearable to her. The storm that rose in her mind clouded her power of thinking. Hence she could not decide what was the right course, to be or not to be. Did not Parvati give up her body by yogic practice when she merely heard her Lord being blamed and accused? These words constantly dinned into her ears She came to decide suicide But all kinds of suicide are prohibited by Shastras as they are conducive to sin. But before separation from her husband suicide was a lesser evil to her. Thus deciding deliberately and not rashly she fell into a well and expired.

Social life is beset with many disadvantages as it is blessed with many advantages. Social life is living in group and one man's food some times, becomes another man's poision. What was calculated to be a path of salvation for her husband, led the wife to suicide But all decisions are the effects of our deeds in this and the past life which influence our will. In no other way can we explain the mysterious mental operations and decisons unwarranted by the present causes. Fatal cruelty infleted even upon herself is not tolerated both in the legal and the spiritual world. As a moral punishment for the wanton ending of

her life she was condemned to ghostly life of inhuman suffering. In her wild terror she appeared as a ghost before Raghavendra who recognised her and felt compassion for her hasty deed and released her from this painful inflication. In the family of Reghavendra even now on the eve of the marriage, a married woman is chosen to receive respectful worship as symbolically representing the ghost, Saraswatibai.

In the meanwhile Yadavendra while on tour heard the news of the sad death of Shri Sudheendra his Guru. He also heard that Raghavendra teerth had been made the head of the Mutt after receiving sanyasa. Yadavendra was very glad to hear this news and eagerly went to Kumbhakona to congratulate Raghavendra, who received him with due respect. For Yadavendra was senior to Raghavendra as a monk. Because he had received holy orders before Raghavendra. He offered Yadavendra the idols of worship, which were worshipped by him with great devotion for some days. Yadavendra returning them to Raghavendra went his way. After some days he reached the shore of the Krishna and expired there.



CHAPTER X

The word Raghavendra is on the lips of many nowadays. Hence we must know the etymological meaning of this popular word. Raghavendra is first and foremost the name of Mula Rama. In his dream Sudheendra had been ordered to give this name to the monk who was originally Venkannabat and accepted Sanyasa afterwards. Shri Sudheendra blessed Raghavendra saying that he would be as holy as Ramabhadra and as beneficient to the world as the memory of Shri Rama. By the grace of God Shri Raghavendrateertha dedicated himself to the service of humanity throughout his life and his Guru knew this before hand. Even the good natured people often tempted to go astray by evil influence need the guidance and control from such Gurus of spiritual insight. Raghavendra by etymological meaning shows his eligibility to be such a guide. For Raghavendra is composed of words and letters which yield this very meaning. The word अव in Raghavendra means sin. बति means 'destroys' ने is the desired object and राति means 'gives'. That is the meanig when the word is etymologically split up. Synthetically combined Raghavendra is 'one who destroys sin and gives the desired object'. Therefore Gopaladasa has sung in praise of Raghavendras's power thus—"every letter that forms the word Raghavendra has meaning taken part by part. The whole word has the meaning that Raghavendra is one that robs us of all our sins and gives the desired object. Appannacharya in his famous Gurustotra corroborates this very meaning.

Raghavendra is free from sin; so all that belongs to him, his body, his work, his knowledge and even his name are all pure and holy. His perconality impressed others that he must be one of the inmates of heaven His body has the lustre of purified gold, Peace and piety were writ large on his face. It was an index to the extraordinary contentment of his mi d coming from god realis-No one would miss the light of his ation. flaming eyes. Ears are adorned with Tulasi. The nose was marked with vertical lines of Chandana which went up the fore head. His tongue was the stage on which the goddess of letters danced. His broad chest assured us a kind heart and indomitable courage. His long arms were said to be the signs of an extraordinary person. His feet were holy by per-forming pilgrimages. Thus mere sight of his unique personality would impress on others and inspire them with devotion and encou rage them to rely on him for their final release.

The daily routine of work a man does, the method and plan of this daily life, the spirit with which he does his work - all this reveals the man. his education, his culture, his taste and his attitude towards life. Let us study Raghavendra the man from the routine and method of work he followed. One thing was clearly noticeable in all the duties and the deeds he did, and that was the dedication of all his work to God, and another thing was that he was blessed with royal life though he did not want it. In the same manner though Prahlada desired only humble service of God. Narasinha bestowed on him sovereignty for a long period of time: For Raghavendra was now enjoying the fruit of all his good deeds No doubt for a few days he had to suffer from starvation and poverty. But afterwards he was leading a luxurious But his mind was not attached to those pleasures. His unruffled mind in all the vicissitudes of life revealed Raghavendra, the man of spiritual stuff-

Raghavendra woke up in the early hours of the morning awakened by the songs of bards who would sing in praise of him. He would then fall into deep meditation of God and his deeds. After a due course of deep thinking he would go out to give darshana to many devotees waiting for it. He would then take a touch of the earth at the trunk of Tulasi plant, and then fall at the feet of Hanuman Then he would go to the Kaveri to have his daily dip in it. Usually the morning would be very pleasant. He would attend to calls of nature. He cleaned his teeth. According to rules of bathing rituals he would sip the water thrice and have a plunge in the water. He would repeat mantras of eight syllables, six syllable and twelve syllables. Aftr the purifying mud-bath he would under go the regular course of bath accompanied with selected mantras. Then giving offerings of water to gods he would take holy teertham of Vishnu, He would wear dry clothes of holy red and bear all marks of Shri. Vishnu. He would now be shining like the brilliant sun. He would retire to the Tapovan, tell the beads accompanied with Pranava, worship Vyasa Musti and listen to the Purana recited by learned Brahmins. He would go round the Brindavana of his Guru, Vijayeendra Teerth and then would walk to the Mutt. Stopping on the way he would bow down to Kumbheshwara.

Then his academic course of teaching begins with the study of Brahma Sutras one of the three Prasthanas that treat of Brahman. This book is dedicated to the enquiry into the nature of

Brahman and topics allied to it. This is the standard work of Vedanta philosophy and while teaching it, he makes reference to other systems of Indian philosophy for comparison and sometims for refutation. The sum and substance of the work is that Narayan is Brahman full of innumerable and unlimited excellent qualities, completely immune from defects. Perfection and independence are his main traits. He is approached by the seekers and he blesses them with salvation. This is the central idea of the sutras and the holy texts of the sacred books. Madhva's attempt is to show that all holy works accepted by Vedic scholars have this one import. Jayateerth has brought his scholarship to bear upon this point, while elucidating the commentaries of his master-Chandrikacharya in his gloss has argued out the same contention with convincing reasons.

Here is a model discussion wich reveals the secret of Brahma vidya or systemstic knowledge of Brahman A pandit opened topic with the swamiji thus:-

Pandit -"Revered swamiji! The explanation you gave is not satisfactory For who is Narayan? The conception of Narayan is not warranted by any evidence. The only thing known by experi-

ence is "I" as in such statements as "I am happy" "I am miserable". No other thing can be derived by experience. Perception or inference does not admit any other thing as real. Vedas prove Brahman as reality, which therefore is not different from this '1' or Jeeva. As the Brahman and the individual souls are one and as the soul is known to us every moment, the BrahmSutras need not make an attempt to enquire into the nature of Brahman. Besides difference between any two things is really false. 'I' experenced by us all, as chit or pure intelligence is true. As we proceed in realisation this 'I' also disappears Pure intelligence is what remains, and that alone If so, how can Brahman have any attributes at all? Then that cannot be Narayana having auspicious attributes. Therefore we need not know him and worship him. When maya the root cause of the appearance of the manifold withdraws, this difference and mundane manifold ness also disappears and Brahman alone remains. And that is Moksha. Therefore it is wrong to suppose that we get Moksha by other means. As for other aims of reaching heaven and other worlds, it is enough if we perform enjoined duties or Karma. Therefore this enquiry into the nature of Brahma is futile."

This is an objection closely reasoned out and plausibly sound. This objection gave good scope for the swamiji to enlighten the real nature of the ultimate reality for the benefit of pious disciples. Thus he put forth the very substance of the shastras.

Raghavendra Swami - "Your objection is not sound. For daily experience alone cannot deliver the goods. Perception alone cannot be the guarantor of the ultimate reality. For it is beyond the reach of perception. Man is surperior to other animals because he is gifted with intelligence to know this reality which is beyond five senses. In daily life we some times reach the skirt of this reality. A healthy eye sees what a defective eye cannot see Emotions beyond the experience of a layman are enjoyed by the poets and artists who are absorbed in them. Miracles and wonders in this world, suggest an unlimited Power guiding and controlling the universe-Such an inconceivable and ununderstandable reality is beyond the reach of all our facutlies of understanding. We must approach the source which explains this inexplicable being. That is the revealed Vedas. They are known as Sadagamas which are self evident. This source is not a creation of modern times but it has been existing since eternity. It is as eternal as eternity itself. So it is uncreated and everlasting. Not only tradition but reason also is essential to know its real meaning and import With the help of canons of interpretation based on solid rensoning it will be possible to reconcile apparent contradictions and arrive at a happy and coherent import, which is the real purport of all the Vedas. That must be churned out by impartial discssion and pure reasoning."

"The Vedas are mainly devoted to the treatment of Brahman No doubt here and there you find stray sentences propounding the identity of Jeeva and Brahman But these sentences must be read and interpreted in their proper context using canons of interpretation. If the apparent and the inconsistent meaning is to be accepted as the real purport then there need not be any big works for the exegesis of the Vedic texts Had the individual soul been Brahman himself, all the activities in the mudane world would stop. It is no use explaining away the existence of the world as mere illusion. Rather it would be better if we discuss fully the actual sentences that state the identity, taking into consideration the context, the beginning and the end of the passage (उपक्रम and उपसंहार), the rules of grammer to dissolve compound words and to interpret them, the rules of reconciliation of inconsistencies and contradic tions and then compare them with secular sentences describing identity between different things, and arrive at a meaning not detrimental to the essential sovereignty and supremacy of Brahman. This will be a better interpretation than the former one. The Brahma Sutras have set this task before them. Had identity been the ultimate meaning of the Vedas. Brahma Sutras would not have enforced, on the aspirant, enquiry and investigation into the nature of Brahman. The real seeker after Truth cannot but study the Brahma Sutras to know Brahman. Shri Madhya has shown what the purport of the Brahma Sutras So Narayan the abode of pure attributes free To meditate on from defects is Para Brahman. him with undivided attention is the Supreme duty of man To realise Brahman and to be blessed with his grace is the fulfilment of life. Life is full of love not love that is hollow and humbug but Love that is tested and found genuine on the touch-stone of joys and sorrows. God is the source of Love and its fulfilment is supreme This is the lesson taught by all Shastras-This is the principle of life". Thus the Swamiji expatiated upon this interesting topic and stopped.

His disciples enjoyed this lucid discourse. The man who had raised the objection was ashamed of his own ignorance; and bowing to the Swamiji took his leave.

In the daily routine of his lessons some knotty problems would crop up in the discussion, which would continue till mid day. Then knowing that it was late, he would abruptly end the discussion and get up for bath Having his midday dip in the lake, he would hurry for worship spiritual history of the idols showed that they had played an import role in the spiritual realisation of the great souls. The idol of Mula Rama was worshipped in all the yugas and was specially worshipped by Madhva in Kaliyuga. The same idol is now worshipped by Raghavendra. Hence this idol is considered a proud and rich poession by those who are spiritually inclined-Mandap studded with precious stones the upperstage shining with the idol of Laxmi Narayana riding on Garuda with his insperable fiance, appeared like Swetadweepa. On the middle stage as in Ananthasana the idol of Shri Mula Rama. worshipped by Brahma himself, is standing in stately pomp. The noble demeanour of Digvijaya Rama and Jaya Rama added to the beauty and brilliance of the whole of the set-up of inricate

litergy. On the lower stage called Vaikuntha is standing the Vaikuntha Vasudeva along with the idol of Shri Krishna prepared in gold by Ragha vendra himself. These he would worship daily as per prescribed rites and practices.

After daily worship he would accept alms in the form of meals. After meals he would teach Grammer and Logic Then he would call the local Pandits and would have a friendly discussion on the topics of Vedanta This would be done in the spirit of enlightened entertainment which ultimately would be dedicated to Lord Krishna as a part of worship.

In the evening after the lessons were over he would have the evening bath in that lake and then he would offer evening worship with fruits and flowers, milk and suger, ending with Arati Then he would sit for meditation, mentally reviewing all that he has done, through out the day. Humbly and honestly he would offer it at his feet in meek submission. In gratitude his throat would be choked with tears. He would then fall into a trance severing all connection with the wakeful world. After sometime he would come out with words broken and disconnected yet

saturated with deep love and fresh by the contact with Lord's feet People who waited for these words coming direct from spiritual land would hear these words and get spiritual infection and physical horripilation. Reghavendra would then break into a song in that ecstatic joy which would surge up from his rapturous heart.

"Today Lord Govind! show me your feet, Oh Lord Mukunda! Oh Lord of Charming face, son of Nanda and Yashoda; who lifted Mandara Mountain, Lord of supreme bliss, Lord of Maha-Laxmi! Lord! being tied by this mundne life, I have been tormented and teased; Being unable to find my parth, I am exhausted in this life.

"Accept me as your child, being blind to my failures. Oh father of Manmatha! Krishna! Save me Oh father! In my ignorance I led a cowardly life. Oh Hari! I was not attached to you firmly. I never attempted to see you; never did I sing in praise of your prowess. Oh you charmer, Krishna! I earnestly pray to you! I became a burden to the world, went astray and fell into the company of the wicked. None to give me succor but you, to whom I am now coming. Oh! brave Venu Gopal! ford me across to the other shore, Oh! Hari!

This rapturous song flooding with delight swept the hearers off their feet and plunged them in to supreme bliss. They also joined the swamiji in prayers forgetting themselves completely. After a long time they would come to themselves. Then Swamiji would bless them with parting coloured rice and they would depart.

This is the daily routine of the great soul dedicated to a life of surrender, worship and service We need not much expatiate or comment upon it. we shall leave it to speak for itself, the noble life of a great spiritual star-

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Many years had elapsed since swamiji had taken holy orders There was political unrest in Cholamandala. Vijaya Raghava Naik of Tanjore had to face invasions from Madhura, Vellure, Mysore and Bijapur. He was defeated and to save his life he had to sue for peace There was plunder and arson in the country and closely in its wake entered terrible famine Vijaya Raghava was very liberal like his forefathers. So he spent money from his treasury and fed his subjects But famine grew more and more terrible and took a heavy toll of life. So the Nayak as a last resource approached the Swamiji who knowing past, present and future found that the famine would not abate soon. So the Swamiji went to Tanjore to help the king in his life saving undertaking. He stayed there for twelve years and spent money from his purse to help the poor, and by miraculous ways replenished the coffers of the king as soon as it was found empty. Thus with the blessings of the Swamiji the king and his subjects were saved from a terrible calamity.

Then Swamiji performed special penances and meditations for the return of plenty and abundance, in the country He had some sacrifices performed. As a result, rains set in and the people of Chola had their old days of happiness again-The King's joy knew no bounds. He offered to the Swamji a necklace of jewels. The sacrifice came to an end and as the last offer to the sacred fire Swamiji asked the priest to throw this jewel necklace into the fire. The king was awefully upset and felt insulted. He was enraged to see his gift thrown in the fire. Reading his mind Raghave ndra laughed in his sleeves and pitying him prayed to Parashu Rama, in the secrificial fire, to return the necklace in tact. The necklace come out glittering. People assembled were amazed to see this miracle and stood dumb. All bowed down to the Swamiji in submissive devotion. As for the King he sank within himself through fear and shame, fell at the feet of the swamiji and prayed earnestly that he must be pardoned. The large hearted Swamiii blessed him with special gifts and returned to Kumbhakonam.

In those days raisway train or buss was not available for long journey. These would facilitate not only journey but also culture and tradition. Culture and trdition would travel along with railway lines and bus-roads. Hence in order to revive and keep alive our religion and culture pontifical heads of different mutts kept moving from one

place to another awakening the people to their sense of religious and spiritual obligation. By touring far and wide the religious teachers spread the gospel of truth and love. So travel and teaching formed an important part in the life of every great teacher. Raghavedra undertook touring to preach the people, the importance of pilgrimage to sacred places and rivers. First habegan his eastern tour.

Even while on tour Raghavendra would give his daily lessons to students in Shastras right from Pramana - Padhati, an epistomological treatise on knowledge and its means, together with their validity, to Chandrika an elucidatory gloss of high order on Jayateertha's commentary on Madhva's Bhashya of Brahma-Sutras Hundreds of students used to take benefit of his teaching. In big places Pandits used to attend the assembly presided over by the Swamiji and partake in the discussions on different Shastras Showing their proficiency they would get due recognition and rich gifts according to their merit.

Going down to the east he reached a place called Pari-Purna-Nagar and bowing down to Bhagavan, started for Kamalalaya. There he worshipped Maha Laxmi and went to Ardha

Nareeswara. With great devotion he propitiated Mahadeva there-

Then he reached a place where the [Kaveri poured her holy waters into the ocean. I here he stayed for some time having his holy dip in the sea. He continued his teaching and preaching the pupils and the public.

Then he traced his steps towards Champakeswara. There he bathed at Setu Bandhana, visited Darbhashayana Rama, and Setu Madhaya and then reached Aiagiri. From there he wended his way towards Ananta Shayana. He paid his visits to Ananta Padmanabha and Janardana deva. Then he came to the district of Tinavalli on the bank of the TamraParni. Shri Raghavendra met there a Brahmin who had been excommunicated by the community and thus had been very much harassed. He fell at the feet of the Swamiji and requested him to raise the ban of Excommunication. The Swamiji came to know his innocent nature and asked him to undergo purificatory and penetential rites. Then he sprinkled water, rendered holy, by the touch of Conch shell (शंबोदक) over him and this purified him. The public however murmered and gradged to accept him, as purified. The Swamiji explained to the people that by nature he was a pious man and the Conchshell water had that power of purification. To corroborate what he had said he showed certain sings of purification. The people were convinced and accepted the Brahmin as purified and removed the ban on him. From Tinnavelli he came to Madhura.

Just as Benaras was known to be a famous centre of learning in Northen India, so also Madhura was known for its learning in the South. Here you could find pandits well-versed in their own branches of learning. Any Pandit entering Madhura did not go out without being tested by the Pandits. The Naiks of Madhura were as powerful as the rulers of Mysore. Tanjore and Vijaya Nagar. They had been well established in the south. They were great patrons of Sanskrit learning and regional language and literatures. Therefore Madhura was an abode for many Pandits. When Swamiii went to Madhura Tirumala Naik ruled there (1923-1959). minister was one Neela Kantha Disxit who was the grandson of Appayya Dixit. He was very Orthodox, learaed and a great advocate of Shivadwaita. Adwaites adopt the system of Bhatta Meemansakas, to coduct the routine business of the Shastras. The Dixit planned to test the knowledge of the Swamiji in his system of Meemansa. He raised

some doubts and objections in Meemansa which were easily cleared by the Swamiji. By this time the Swamiji had much advanced in writing wosks and he had finished his own compilation of Bhatta Sangraha. He had explained and elucida. ted Jaimini Sutras according to the interpretation of the Bhatta school. Dixit went through it. He was simply astonished to see the depth of his study and the grasp of the subject, which the Swamiji had shown in that work. He placed that book on the state-elephant and had a splendid procession in the streets of the city. The Swamiji paid his respectful visit to Sundareshwara and Meenakshidevi of the place and came over to Shri ranga This place was sacred to Ranganatha where he stayed for some time. Then he began his northern tour.

CHAPTER XII

The Swamiji first reached Namkal and worshipped Shri Narashinha with devotion. From there he came to Vellore, which was then the capital of Vijayanagar Kings-Venkatapatiraya and Devaraya the fourth. There were two Shaiva Pandits by name, Veerabhadra and Bhairavabhat. They came to Swamiji for discussion. They were very learned Pandits. They had a num-ber of disciples and were highly respected at the court of the King The discussion went on for two or three days. Then they were stalemated. The King was surprised to see his erudition and impressive personality of the Swamiji. He decreed grants of villages and lands in favour of Swamiji. This is the second grand success he had achieved. Thus he finished his southern tour, and went to the South Canra district.

Here formerly Madhvacharya had been given a grand reception by the king Jayashinha. Shri Raghavendra went to Vishnumangala and adored Bhagavan in all submission. Then he turned toward Subrahmanya, where it was well known that every one would be granted his prayer immediately. Here the Swamiji rested for a while

Then he moved towards Udipi He stayed in the Mutt which his Guru's Guru had got as a gift. When he stood before Shri Krishna his joy knew no bounds He fell into a trance forgetting his surroundings. Then he sang and danced Though he had seen many forms of Narayan still he had a special liking for an attachment to the form of Shri Krishna.

He had come into this Kali age only to worship Shri Krishna and he had done the same when he had come as Vyasaraya. Though Raghavendra daily worshipped Mula Rama still his heart would go out to Shri Krishna to fall into ecstatic raptures. Therefore at the end of the song which he composed he mentioned Venugopala as literary mark of his composition. At the sight of Shri Krishna his mind enjoyed extra ordinary peace and unusual tranquility. Here he took to writing as his main occupation.

The goddess of learning had asked him to write a commentary on Chandrika Accordingly he began to write Prakasha on Chandrika But he stopped the work in the middle and thought of the elucidation of the sutras by writing Nyaya Mukta vali which intends to summarise the discussion in the whole of the Adhikarana. (The Brahma Sutras are divided into four Adhyayas according to the

topics dealt with. Each Adhyaya is divided into four Pandas subdividing the main topic of the Adhyaya. Each Pada has many Adhikaranas consisting of many sutras treating a single topic to its logical end) This work is posterior to Tantra Deepika chronologically. After these two works were completed the Swamiji wrote Parimala, the famous gloss on the Naya Sudha of Jayatertha. Then he completed the half finished Prakasha and dedicated all these works to Udipi Krishna, the God worshipped by Shri Madhya.

Just Then it was summer of the year Shubha krit (1663 A. D). The Mahabhisheka to Mula-Rama was to be performed on Rama Navami in the holy vicinity of Shri Krishna of Udipi-Elaborate preparations were made for this ceremony, which was conducted on a grand scale in the Krishna Mutt. Every one was delighted to witness this function. The Swamiji's joy was beyon't measure. He felt an unusual thrilling sensation which led him very near trance, but which he avoided purposely. For he was required to pay wakeful attention to the worship of Mula Rama.

A Yogi of the high order renching nearly a perfect stage of Yoga finds both trance and wakefulness the same. For he has attained that stage

when being alive to environment, he finds his mind submerged into meditation of subtle perfection acute thinking and absorbing attention and overpowering emotion. In the Krishna Temple, Raghavendra found the whole atmosphere surcharged with electrifying divine presence which he felt in every cell of his skin. His mind had received a glow of unusual kind of tint of heavenly hue and softness and peace of the disembodied soul For the mind was now pregnant with divine touch and living vitality. The divine contact was so heavy that mind was feared to break asunder its physical cell under its impact and enter into pure consciousness.

But Raghavendra stopped the flow of divinity into the mind and averted the spiritual crisis. Raghavendra's mind recovered its physical sound ness and all bodily activities continued unhindered Yet his throat was choked and tears flowed incessently; hair bristled and stood on end and soft smile played on his face. His eyes were flaming with peaceful radiance. Perhaps Shri Krishna was dancing before him with the magical charm of his flute. On such occasions he would feel every inch of his body and mind, divinised and made ready to receive divine contact. Dedicating all the services and worship he had done so

far, to Lord Krishna he returned to the mundane world.

By this time the Swamiji had given discourses on Chadrika nearly ten times. This was a kind of intellectual ritual or sacrifice Thus stay at Udipi in his life loomed large on account of many incidents. So while leaving Udipi he felt as if he wrenched his soul forcibly away from that sacred place. As Prahlada, he has been worshipping since long Shri Narahari in the Kimpurusha Khanda; as Raghavendra he worshipped Mula Rama. Yet he liked very much Shri Krishna of Udipi who would present himself before him whenever he so desired. So he made a gold idol of Shri Krishna holding the churning handle in his hand and worshipped him daily along with Mula Rama This idol is to be found in the Raghavendra Swami Mutt of Nanjangud, even today.

CHAPTER XIII

In the course of his future tours the Swamiji arrived at Mysore. Then the ruling King was Dodda Devaraya. The capital city was Shrirangapattanam Already the Swamiji's fame had spread far and wide. Besides Vibhudendra Teertha had been received by the king with great pomp and had been granted a gift of a large estate of lands, for the use of the Mutt The king had requested the Swamiji in return to stay permaat Nanjangud. Since then Nanjangud became the Head quarters of the Shri. Raghavendra Mutt. Vijayeendra also had passed by Mysore and Nanjangud, while going to Udipi-Therefore Swamiji came to Nanjangud and met Dodda Devaraya. there. In all humble submissive ness the King requested His Holiness to proceed to the capital. It was the month of Ashadha and from then the ascetics stick to one place for four months and observe the vow of Chaturmashya. So the king requested Swamiji to come and stay at Shrirangapattanam for Chaturmashya. Swamiji liked to stay at the feet of Ranganatha and hence complied with the request of the King who took him in a grand procession into the city.

That day the Swamiji performed his puja in the palace itself. Next day was the eleventh day of fasting and prayer and it was first day of Chaturmasya. So the king requested Swamiji to continue his stay and to break his fast on the twelfth day morning in the palace only. Swamiji appreciated his earnestness and complied with his request and had his pooja in the palace.

On the eleventh day after the pooja the king granted the gift of a village (5-7-1663) Nellur or Devarajapur with due ceremonies and rites. Besides he gave rich diamonds and other precious stones to be used for worship and adoration of Shri MulaRamadeva.

Swamiji finished his vow of Chaturmashya and went to Ramanathpur where he bathed in the river Kaveri and worshipped Bhagawan. Then he went towards the North. On the way he went to Chitradurga. There was in the Mutt a devotee who sincerely served the Swamiji and would often trouble him in all childishness to get him final beautitude or Mukti. The Swamiji would simply laugh away his ignorance. Chitradurga was not only a historical place but a sacred place; for the Pandavas had visited that place in their wanderings. It is believed that Gopalakrishna on the hill had been installed by Janamejaya. Down

below there is Hanuman of five bells which was woshipped by the Pandavas. So the Swamiji stayed there for some time One day casually he called his faithful devotee who was always pester ing him for Mukti, and said to him- "If you follow my words you will get Mukti." His joy knew no bounds He said he was ready. He bathed and performed his Sandhya. Then the Swamiji gave him Panchagavya (the purificatory mixture of the five things of a cow) After the penitentiary ceremony was over, a pyre of wood was prepared He was initiated into Beejakshara mantra and then was asked to enter into the blazing fire With a smiling face and a light heart and a peaceful mind, he bore the dust of the Swamiji's feet on his head and jumped into the Some spectators openly objected to the doings of the Swamiji calling it mere exploitation of ignorance and innocense of that simpleton, with the bait of gaining Moksha, for Swamiji's pleasure. The Swymiji called them to his side and asked them to lend their ears to hear heavenly bell ringing while the lucky man rode the Viman to the other world. They actually heard it and these mischief mongers were shamefully silenced. They postrated themseives before Swamiji and begged his pardon.

Then the Swamiji toured in the North Karnaka districts He visited Gadag and took darshanam of Veeranarayana. There is a village named Kiratageri near Gadag. This belonged to one Venkat Desai. He invited Shri Raghavendra Swamiji to his house. Those were the summer days and mangoes were available in abundance. The juice was pressed into a big pot to be served for all at the time of the meals. The young child of the Desai, while playing fell into the juice pot and died. All were engaged in seeing puja and so the Desai forgot to look after the child. After some time the Desai began to search and found the dead child fully immersed in the pot of the mango juice. The Desai was deeply distressed For he had arranged the Puja with a view to be blessed with the favours of the Swamiji. But all that was foiled and now the Swamiji had to fas. So his grief was beyond discription. This incident spread from ear to ear till at last it reached the ears of the Swamiji who called the Desai asked him to bring the dead body of the child. The body was well-washed and laid down before the Swamiji, who sprinkled holy water over the dead body, repeating certain holy hhymns from Vedic texts. It was an accidental death and the child had not died naturally. Hence Raghavendra brought the child back to life, in no time. Desai was highly pleased and immediately transferred the village in favour of Swamiji, so that Lord Krishna might be pleased with this donation. Even now the village is a gift and an Inam village in the nane of Shri Raghavendra.

There are many such examples of miracles of saving lives of persons who had died, not naturally but accidentally. For natural course of death cannot be deterd by any one. By dint of penance and austerities an accidental death which is willed otherwise, by the supreme will is averted through the grace of that Power. Once Shri Raghavendra brougt back to life his servant who had died on the day of his nuptials, by inadvertent ly dashing his head against the frame of his door while passing through it in a great hurry.

From Kiratageri he came to Hubli. There also he saved the son of the Nawab of savanur who had died of sanke bite. The Nawab in gratitude gave Krishnapur and other villages as gift.

He showed the wonderful power of vedic mantras to those who were not in the fold of the four castes. The Veerashaivas hated the Vaishnavas and they tried to test the Swamiji's wonderful occult powers.

Once the Desai of Sirasangi, a Veerashaiva. had forfeited the lands of Brahmins in his own Desagati and when the Swamiji came to his place he placed a long wooden pounding pestle & asked curtly to use the esoteric power of the Mantras so that the dry wood of that pestle, should sprout out into green leaves He threatened to call the Brahmins hypocrites if they could not do this miracle. The Desai was not open to reasoning and therefore the swamiji could not convince him by arguments, that the vedas must be accepted as great guarantors of knowledge to deliver spirituai goods, even though they could not show such miraculous power of these Mantras. So the Swamiji in order to convince him of the high efficacy of Vedic Mantras had to take recourse to miraculous deeds The swamiji accepted the challenge of the Desai and sprinkled holy water on the dry wood for some days. It sprouted like a green plant. The Desai had thought this to be impossible and he was simply amazed to see this wonderful event. He expressed regret for his hasty remarks and paid the Swamiji high respect. He then entertained a respectful attitude towards Brahmins and their community.

CHAPTER XIV

Then the Swamiji went to Pandharpur. On the way the wife of one of his servants delivered a child in a place where there was neither shade nor water. Immediately the Swamiji pouring some water from his Kamandalu, gave rise to a puddle of water and brought some shadow to cover and cool, the mother and the child and thus saved them from the scorching heat of the burning sun and unquenchable thirst.

Thus Swamiji showing his powerful religious wonders wherever he went at last reached Pandharpur. In the meanwhile he met an opponent in discussion named Shesha and had a long discussion on a subject from the Vedanta The Swamiji banked upon the book Vagvaikhari by Shri Vijayeendra Swamiji, for his arguments and thus silenced him

Raghavendra stood before Panduranga and his heart lept with joy. Then he proceeded to Kolhapur. After the fall of Vijayanagar not only in the whole of the South but in the whole of India there was disturtance and trouble. Tanjore alone was the seat of Aryan culture. Shivaji built another Hindu Empire on on the basis of Aryan culture. It is said Shivaji was helped to a great extent in this undertaking

by a statesman of extra-ordinary abilities Naropa ntha Hanumante, a follower of Shri Madhva-His place of activities was Kolhapur. So Raghavendra Swnmi being the Royal Guru of Tanjore Court was received at Kolhapur with magnificent pomp and stately ostentation. The Swamiji stayed there for some time. He then went so far as Nasik and then bathed in the river Godavari and returned. On the way a Brahmin, going from Bijapur to Chikodi had fallen in a forest almost dead, scorched by the burning rays of the sun The Swamiji used his wonderful powers, gave him water and saved him from imminent death.

Bijapur was tae capital of a big kingdom. Then Ibrahim Adilshah II was ruling. Though he was a Muslim, he showed great tolerance to Hiudus He had great faith in the Brahmins. Seeing his inclination and love of Hinduism the Muslims called him "Jagadguru".

The Swami with all his followers went to Bijapur. The Nawab accorded him a hearty welcome and a royal reception There were in his court many Brahmins of different sects. They all admired the learning of the Swamiji and being convinced of the truth of his teachings became his disciples and bore the slgns of the

Vaishnavas, on their body The Nawab being very much pleased, gave the Swamiji not only the title of Jagadguru but the royal emblem of white umbrella

Swamiji left Bijapur and came to Alur, on the river Krishna. There he bathed in the river. Here he wrote Bhavadeepa, a gloss on Tatva Praka shika, and Tatwamanjari a gloss on Sutra Anubhashya. From there he went to the east and reached a temple of Hanuman near Manvi in the district of Raichur and stayed there. There he took the vow of Chaturmasys. After his morning dip and worship he was engaged in writing a book-He saw a Chandala standing near the Garuda column and smiled.

- R-"Lo! whence did you come?
- Ch—Yes my master! This is my fate. I heard your arrival and came to see you. As before help me out of this difficulty.
- R—Yes, do some service to God, tomorrow.

 He went much satisfied. Next day he brought a handful of mustard seeds and placed his gift at a respectable distance and with a low obeisance he prayed he should be lifted up. That was Ashadha and the Swamiji could not use mustard as it was one of the prohibited things in that month Still because it was offered with sincerity and

devotion and becasuse it was sacrificial grain, the Swamiji ordered that the mustard seeds should be used for preparation of food for the day. After the meals were over some left-ovor was given to the Chandala who in all submissiveness accepted it and ate it up. Then with the names of Shri Hari on his lips left the mortal eoil and reached his emancipated state. Formerly he was Kanaka at the time of Vyasaraj'a and now he had come to see the Swamiji, Vyasaraja's incarnation. After accepting prasada from him, Kanaka was released from that body.

His vow of Chaturmsya continued there. Daily a big group of devotees came to him and being much pleased with his Darshana and Prasada they returned. A contemporary writer Shrinivasacharya of Bidaralli came to see the Swamiji. He with his brother Yadavarya has made his name as a writer of commentary on sacred texts. At the behest of his elder brother Shriniyasaeharya had come there to be blessed by the Swamiji. So he fell prostrate before the Swamiji and begged for blessings and he felt sure that he would be purified by the blessings of the Swamiji, who desired and expressed that the distinguished guest should take Teertha and Prasad So Shrinivasacharya stayed there. At

the time of meals, he found that the preparations had been mixed with mustard seeds which were prohibited during that month. He was in a fix; he could not break his yow: nor could he incur the displeasure of the Swamiji whose blessings he had come to seek But the Swamiji understood his qualms, and preparations without mustard seeds were served to him. Shrinivasacharya was very glad and finished his meals with much gratification. He took leave of the Swamiji accepting coloured rice (मंत्राक्षता) as parting blessing. He was very glad to see that he was recognised and respected. He reached his place and bowed down to his elder brother, Yadavaraya read on the face of Shrinivasacharya some sinful stigma arising from offending his superiors. he asked his younger brother what the matter was. He said if Raghavedra were not pleased, it was likely that Shri Madhya and Shri Hari also were not pleased with his behaviour.

Shrinivasacharya explained to his brother that Swamiji received him as a distinguished guest with special attention and dignified treatment, His sweet smile and sweeter words gave the highest delight and greatest satisfaction. Then Yadavarya asked him to show the parting coloured rice which he did readily. To the conster-

ation of both, the red coloured rice had turned out to be black. Yadavarya told his brother that it was clear he had grievously offended the Swamiji. Instead of being blessed he had been cursed. Yadavarya was very eagerto knowwhat had happen ed Shrinivasacharya told the whole story including his pricks of conscience at the circumstances of being forced to eat prohibited things. He also told the large-mindedness of Swamiji who provided him with preparations unmixed with mustard seeds. Yadavarya minutely followed his story, snapped his fingers at the story of mustard seeds, in-accepatance of it being the cause of dissatisfaction of the Swamiji. He asked his brother to go again to the Swamiji in all humble supplication and to get his blessings. Shrinivasacharya was greatly distressed but without being exasperated he took kindly to the words of his brother and went to the Swamiji with a hungry stomach and a penitant mind. He fell at the feet of the Swamiji who smiled gently while receiving him kindly. Shrinivasacharya requested Swamiji to forgive his unintended and yet serious offence and save him from the spiritual calamity.

Swamiji-you need not be anxious, it does not matter. There is nothing wrong in what you have done. You have followed the custom of your Mutt and that is right. Perhaps it is Mula Rama who was annoyed at your rejection of his Prasad. Today you just take his Prasad and there ends the matter.

Shrinivasacharya was glad that the problem was so easily solved. That day he heartily took the Prasada, got blessings from Swamiji and departed.

To those who are troubled with knotty spiritual problems in life, and wish to solve them easily example of Shrinivasacharya is highly enlighten ing. There are rules and rules sanctioning certain things and prohibiting certain other things. But we must follow the spirit and not the letter And in settling what the spirit of a rule is we are chiefly guided by men of higher spiritual realisation. Upanishad in its adesha or command tells us that in all matters of doubt our guide is the high souled men (महात). Act as he would desire us to act, and throw the burden on him". They would save us from spiritual calamities. It is no u e insisting on literal meaning being followed It is believed, men of higher realisation have a deeper insight and a wider vision and therefore their decision calls forth ungrudging submission. Seeker of God should do well to adjust their conduct to the decision of superior authority in spiritual matters, though it is a bit different from custom and tradition. But such a change should come from accepted authority. No Tom, Dick, or Harry can bring in changes whimsically.

Dharmaraja was a literal follower of the rules of Dharma. But it was the opinion of Bhima that those rules must be tempered with wisdom and discrimination. As always happened the final decision lay with Dharmaraja and Droupadi had to suffer humilation and molestation at the hands of the Kouravas. The Pandavas had to go to the forest. Now also ignroant people stick to their petty rules and follow them at any cost even in the presence of men of spitritual realisation and pure understanding even when their behaviour reflects upon their superiors.

CHAPTER XV

The Swamiji completed his vow of Chaturmasya and continued his tour. Nearby there was a place called Kandavati and there lived an orphan boy called Venkanna who approached the Swamiji and prostrated himself before him. He prayed that he had none to help him and he should be blessed with help Though he had learnt to read and write while young his guardians did not treat him properly; so he had now been a cowherd and was He showed great devotion to tending cattle elders and teachers. Still he had not learnt Vedic hymns to recite or prayerful psalms to sing. Seeing this neglected soul, Swamiji's heart went out to pity him. He read in his face a very bright future for him and hoped he would fill an important post in the administration of the country. The Swamiji blessed him saying that he should be remembered in times of difficulty. Venkanna was very much pleased with the words of the Swamiji.

At that time the present Advani was a feudatory state, subordinate to Bijapur Sultan Siddi Masud Khan was then the feudatory prince ruling the state. Though he was subordinate to Bijapur Sultan, yet he was trying to be independent by extending his kingdom. Raichur district was

under his rule. Masud Khan in the course of his Daura had come to Venkann's village. Loot and decoities were the order of the day. So none came out to see the Khan. When the Khan was going through the village some body brought a letter to him. In those days it was considered below the dignity of a ruler to read the letter himself. He found Venkanna standing by and called him to read the letter. He had to go up the elephant on which the Khan rode Venkanna was forced to go up. The Khan gave the letter. The Nawab in a stern voice said to him "Heretic! How is it you do not know reading, even thogh you are a Brehmin? Read and you will get reward! If not, you cannot get down alive!" At this thundering-Venkanna trembled from head to foot. He did not know what to do. Some how he remembered the promise of help from the Swamiii "Shri Ragha vendra! Come to my help! I am in great danger." He took the letter and began to read it. He went through the letter which carried the news of success ro the army of the Nawab The Nawab came to like the voice of Venknna and his bold reading He thoght that Venknna trembled on account of his terrible personality and thundering voice. In the meanwhile Venkanna gathered his courage and strength and explained the contents with their implications. The Nawab was greatly delighted to hear his luicd explanation. Immediately he asked Venkanna to join his services and help him in his administration. Soon Venkanna rose to be his privante secretary. Fortune favoures the brave. A Cowherd became a Counseller to the Nawab.

Shri Raghavendra sought Venkanna's spiritual and material welfare. When he actually joined duty he felt he was quite accustomed to that work as if he had been in that post since a long time. Efficiency regularity marked out his work, which won approbation of the Nawab. Venkanna became a veritable ruler of the state. He was anxiously waiting for opportunity to see Swamiji personally and to tell him the wonders of his blessidgs.

Shri Raghavendra went to Shrishaila and worshipping Rudra proceeded to Tirupati, his family and favourite deity. He stayed there some time and then went to Kanchi. He worshipped Varadaraja and Kamakshi and proceeded to Arunachala, and then to Vridhachala and Shrimushnam. Shri Medhva had visited Shrimu shnam and had worshipped Varahamurti. He had

struck the ground with his Danda or holy stick and water had gushed out and formed into a Pond which was then called 'Danda Teertha' Even now Hanuman in three forms is worshipped by the Shri Vaishnavas. So this is a place of which the Madhvas are very proud Shri Raghavendra visited the place and worshipped Varahamurti.

Thus Raghavendra visited the old places of the south and hoisted in all places his triumphal flag of great success. After a long absence he went back to his place KumbhaKonam The peole of Chola Mandala were greateful to him as he had saved them from a great calamity. So people were earnesty and eagerly waiting for him When they knew that he was going to enter the city, the peole decorated the city with arches and festoons and flags, They went to him with the mela of Shahanai and with pot filled with water. The temples of Sarangapani and Kumbheshwara had sent their paraphernalia of honour like white umbrella elephant and other things to honour the Swamiji.

Elephants and horses formed the Van of the procession and they showed respect to him in their own way. The Brahmins chanted vedic

hymns People lustily cheered him A shower of flowers was poured over the Swamiji. Just as Shri Rama after his stay in the forest came to Ayodhya and was enthusiastically received by the citizens, so also Raghavendra Swami was welcomed hearitly by the eager devotees, with royal pomp. In every street triumphal arches were erected and flowers were showered on him, while the sweet music of the shahanai filled the air. Young ladies did Arati before every house. The Swamiji thought that it was Hari's grace that he was so enthusiastically received by the people He entered the Mutt by the eastern gate,

After coming to Kumbhakonam the Swamiji studied minutely the situation at Kumbhakonam. He found the place unsuitable to his activities, Therefore he thought of leaving Kumbhakonam for good. He had not yet finished his stray notes on the Vedas. In order to complete this work he had to leave this place The Swamiji worshipped his Guru's Guru, Shri Vijayeendra Swamy and appointed his own men for daily worship and to manage the Mutt affairs.

From the time of Shri Vijayeendra Swami the administration of all the temples was under the control of the head of the Shri Mutt. The Swamiji transferred the control of Chakrapani and Sarangapani temples to Ahobal Mutt and that of Kumbheswar to Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt. All this was a bolt from the blue to the people who were shocked beyond control. They humbly begged the Swamiji to cancel his programme and to stay there. The Swamiji convinced them of the vastness of his future work and of the necessity of leaving the place for good.

CHAPTER XVI

Then he left Kambhakonam, on an auspicious day. By hurried marches and short campings he reached Hospet From there he went to Nava vrindavana where he paid respects to the Vrindavanas of his Guru and of Chandrikacharya Then he came to Hampi and visited Raghunandana Teertha and Narahari Teertha Afterwards he left for Adoni.

At Adoni Siddi Masud Khan was the Nawab and Venkanna was his Diwan, When he heard the news of the eoming of Swamiji his heart was filled with joy, For he thought he got a splendid opportunity to render grateful services to the Swamiji. Whenever he had an opportunity to talk with the Nawab be used to tell him how great the Swamiji was. He had told htm that the Badshah of Bijapur had given him the title of Jagadguru, and the white umbrella in recognition of the merits of the Swamiji. Therefore the Nawab was very eager to see the Swamiji. He also thought, if possible, to put him to a severe test, to enjoy the fun of it if he did not get through.

The Navab asked Venkanna to accord the Swamiji a befitting welcome when he heard from Venkanna that the Swamiji was going to enter the city. Venkanna made elaborate preparations with double energy as the Nawab had asked him to prepare on a grand scale. So he took personal interest in the decoration of the city and other arrangements. Enthusiasm, cheerful expectation could be marked out every where. Every one would crane his neck to catch a glimpse of the Swamiji

When Swamiji reached the out skirts of the city, the citizens and officers were found waiting for him in large numbers, for his reception. So the Swamiji stopped and first among the officers Venkanna came and prostrated himself before the Swamiii, who did not take long to recognize him. When he saw his beloved Swamiji, Venkanna's heart was filled with gratitude and joy. Just as Bharata's heart surged up with emotion at the sight of Shri Ramachandra after a long separation so also Venkanna's throat was choked with tears and he could not utter any words. He did not even rise up to the dismay and anxiety of the onlookers who could not understand the meaning of all that was happening before their eyes The Swamiji raised him up and passed gently his

hands on Venkanna's back and said— "What Dewanji! How do you do? How is the Nawab doing?"

- V— By your blessings every thing is going on well
- S— We are very glad to see you in such a high position.
- V— It is not my merit Raghavendra! but it is your blessings that has made what I am.
- S— But Venkanna, Mula Rama is expecting still greater service from you.
- V-I am at your disposal. I am merely an instrument to be used by you as you like. But you are so kind as to give credit to me for what you have done. Unlimited is the extension of your compassion!
- S— It is all Rama's grace! Let us talk afterwards. Let us proceed ahead!

Venkanna seated the Swamiji in the golden palanquin and the procession went in the streets of the city. In ali royal pomp the procession went through the streets and reached the place where he was to be put up for his short stay. It was a palatial building with suitable changes made for his puja and sanctity. That day Venkanna was the host to entertain this distinguished guest with his retinue consisting of Pandits and a huge number of students and servants. Venkanna had

made elaborate arrogements to meet all contengencies. Soon the whole camp was settled and was busy, humming like a bee-hive. Swamiji took a round and found every one was attending to his duty. Things were supplied to the mutt in larger quantities than were demanded. After Puja and Prasad all took rest as they had felt tired after a long jorney.

Next day the Nawab hosted this holy saint and an arrangement was made for the royal visit to the Mutt. Venkanna took care that in the meeting rules of holy sanctity, should not be violat ed. Nor should royal dignity suffer. If the Nawab so desired, there should be scope to express his respectful homage to the Swamiji. If he simply wanted to observe cold formality without, in any way, stooping down to respect the Swamiji, nothing should happen to insult the holy dignity of the Mutt. The situation was precarious and required tact and foresight, in an unusual degree and Venkana rose to the occasion.

Venkanna could not guess what exactly would be the attitude of the Nawab towards the Swamiji But when Venkanna read some wanton curiosity if not purposful mischief in the whimsical attitude of the Nawab, he became seriously anxious and was not sure of a happy end of the

interview. In his own mind he submitted the whole affair to the disposal of the Swamiji whose simple look at Venkanna in the assembly assured him of a happy end

When every arrangement was made Venkanna brought the Nawab before the Swamiji. He had thought of deliberately testing the merits of the Swamiji which he felt were attributed to the Swamiji through blind faith So as an offering to be placed before the Swamiji he had brought a silver plate full of things prepared out of mutton and other prohibited things. The Nawab entered the assembly and all rose from their seats except the Swamiji. Covered plate was placed before the Swamiji and the Nawab stood at a respectful distance from the Swamiji, saluting the Swamiji in the Muslim style. The Swamiji smiled and made a sign that he should take the seat kept for him. When all were seated and there was silence. the Swamiji asked the Nawab if he were happy with his subjects. The Nawab was very much impressed with the holy personality of the Swamiji and his guilty conscience began to prick his mind that he had offended the Swamiji by offering unholy things to him. He felt sure that the Swamiji had the ability to command the whole world. The divine lustre radiating from

his body dazzled his human eyes and penetrated to his heart He fell into a penetential mood and regreted for having embarked upon the perilous task of testing such a glorious character now it was too late io retrace his steps. Swamiji was glad to find an occasion to prove, to a non-believer, the probiety and efficaay of religious practices of Hindu Dharma. Venkanna quite unaware what telepathic communication was goidg on between these two minds through emotional influence and how the Swamiji had thrown the Nawab's mind into convulsions upsetting the balance of his mind At last Swamiji called his servant and asked him to bring the holy water. The Nawab was very uneasy and began to suffer as it were from suffocation. He was almost on the point of rising from his seat, but his royal dignity again pressed him into his seat. The Swamiji shut his eyes for a moment and then opening his eyes sprinkled the holy water over the covered plate He said to the Nawab - "We are very glad to receive presents of fruits and flowers from you which we gladly accept". Thus saying he asked the servant to uncover the cloth of the plate. The Nawab's heart beat rapidly and he opened the mouth to say 'no' but he gulped it more than

he expressed it. Only some meaningless sound came out of his mouth and the servant had already opened the plate. Lo! Fresh flowers and juicy fruits had filled the plate. The Nawab was amazed at the miracle and stood aghast, struck with terror, surprise, and supplication. all in a moment. He rallied bodily strength and mental composure and went near the Swamiji and begged to be forgiven.

S-You have done nothing wrong.

N—No Sir! Kindly forgive my childish curiosity S—Do not take it seriously. God is pleased with

you. We expect some service from you.

Our Chief Guru also blessed a Nawab like you Our Guru blessed the King of Bijapur. We are highly respected and hououred by the Adilshah of Bijapur. You have now come to believe in us after you put us to acid test. You have done great service to the cause of Hindu religion which now has showed its worth.

- N- Please forgive my excess. Now today may God be worshipped at my cost.
- S- It is the pleasure of Shri Mula Rama to be done so. We are very glad to receive your hospitality.

The Nawab went home and sent things and money for Puja and Prasad That day also Venkanna supervised the arrangements After all programmes were over the Nawab called Venkanna aside and said to him- "Dear Diwanji I mean to give a permanet gift to your Swamiji so I wish to grant an Inam of a good village under my rule. What is your opinion? Consult your Swamiji also in this matter."

Venkanna said he would gladly consult the Swamiji and let him know the result

Venkannapant informed the Swamiji what the Nawab had told him. Swamiji was very glad to know this; for he also had desired to ask him a grant of the Inam of a village. He thanked God who fulfilled his desire so easily. It was not for a material benefit that he desired a village; it was for spirituial convenience, religious puja, and for performance of austere penance

- S Venkanna! we are very glad. Let us have the village of Manchali on the river Tungabhadra. We shall be more pleased to have that Inam than any other village.
- V— Why so Sire! It is not a good village—It is a village full of prickly pears and baren lands, Purposely the Nawab has given that village to a Kaji who teased the Nawab for an Inam of a village.
- S— It does not matter. Let us have that village we have come all the way from Kumbhakonam to [get that village. Why we insist on

having the possession of that village will be made clear to you afterwards. The presiding deity of that village is Manchalemma whom we worship and pray. What have we to do with lands? For we are Sanyasins and we never crave for wealth. We are satisfied if we get a suitable place for our residence, and Puja. Shri Vyasaraja is standing in the midst of this very river. Our Guru also has chosen a place on the islands made by this river. Therefore we shall be very happy to have this place for our residence.

V - I shall obey your orders.

Saying thus Venkanna went to the Nawab and explained the desire of Swamiji The Nawab was only sorry that he was not able to give a rich village to so worthy a person But he did not like to dissatisfy him. So he gave two other villages to the Khaji and granted the Inam of Manchali in favour of the Swamiji. Venkanna himself did the Sankalpa on behalf of the Navab and went through the rites of Dana ceremony the significance of which is that, the doner surrenders his right, for good, in favour of the donee: by donation of a certain property in his possession. Then a deed was done and registered in the office sanctioning the grant of the village.

CHAPTER XVII

Siri Raghavenra Swami entered Mantralaya on an auspicious day In that villege he erected a Venktesh Mandir. For Venkatesh was his family deity. The village was cleaned and cleared of all weeds and prickly pears and a residence was improvised for Swamiji to stay. Once Venkanna pant came there and visited Swamiji who took him to the bank of the river and asked the Dewan to dig the place where now the Brindavan is situat ed. He did so and found a sacrificial pit filled with ashes. Venkanna asked Swamiji what that was,

The Swamiji replied - This is what we had promised to tell you afterwards. Though barren this is a place with holy associations of unusual sanctity. So you have earned a lot of religious merit by getting this place for us. In the Krit age Prahlad performed a sacrifice here Manchalemma was his tutelory deity of his family. Now onwards, this must be the place of our penance and religious activity. We have before us a great missson which we must carry out in all religions zest, and zeal. We hope that you have understood us why we forced you to get this place for us."

"Besides this in Dwapara age while Pandavas performed the Asvamedha sacrifice and were having victorious march all over India, there was

a battle fought between Anusalva and Arjun in this very place. As long as Anusalva's chariot was standing on this sacrificial ground it was very difficult for Arjuna to defeat him. Then at the suggestion of Bhagawan Krishna, Arjuna retraced a few yards and Anusalva had to move forward leaving the sacrificial ground. Then he was easily defeated. Therefore those who stand here will never sustain a defeat."

Venkanna found that the Swamiji could go back deep into the past as he could go far into the future. He said to Swamiji "Now I understand that you are a great soul endowed with super human powers Every act reveals your occult powers Your personality has many facets which manifest your unfathomable soul in different colours Besides we are having living contact of your spiritural greatness I havere ached the highest pitch of material or worldly prosperity. Now help me to realise my spiritual prosperity. When you are there to guide us we must learn to enter the spiritual land. When you are ready to give us the key to spiritual glory and wealth if we ask you to give us a few coins we are really foolish."

Venkannapant, by the orders of the Swamiji built an inner shrine in the place of that sacrifici al pit. A spacious compound wall was raised all

round the shrine. This compound wall touched the temple of Manehalemma. He was further waiting for the orders of the Swamiji smelt that the Swamiji was thinking of terminating his mundane life soon. He was very much distressed because the bond that had been established between them had been so vitalized that their seperation would be felt keenly and painfully as when a limb is cut from the body. The only consolation was that it was a spiritual bond between two souls which are eternal and hence the bond would continue even after their bodies are destroyed by death. But one living in the body, and the other getting rid of it, is a situation which makes the seperation acute. So Venkannapant came to the conclusion that in case the Swamiji would leave him, he would follow him casting away the mortal eoil So strong is the bond between Guru and his disciple in spiritual field. But Venkannapant decided that the final decision lay with the Swamiji, in such important concerns.

The month of Ashadha of Virodhikrit samva tsara was fast approaching. The Swamiji observed the vow of Chaturmasya at Mantralaya only. Ashadha pssed: Shravana set in The first Friday was the Varamahalaxmi day and the Swamiji accorded a special worship to Manchalemma, offered Naivedya and Arati. For she is Durga in that form and Swamiji prayed to her in all devotion. The prayer, a spontaneous pouriug of his heart runs as follows.

"A bow to you, Oh giver of gifts! Krisna! you are unmarried observing the vow of celibacy. Your body shines like the morning sunhave your face as delitghtful as the orb of the moon. You are as bright as Laxmi, the spouse Shri Narayana You, wander in the sky! Your vow of celebacy is clear in your nature. Taking vow of celebacy you have purified the heaven. There fore O Goddess! You have been praised and worshipped by the Gods! O the killer of Mahi shasura! You killed him for the protection of three worlds. Oh! the best among the deities. be pleased with me and show pity on me! and be good to me! He who bows down to you in the morning will find nothing difficult to obtain You are called Durga by the wise because you save others from durga or difficulties. Oh You Durga! You are fame courage success, honour knowledge, progeny, intellect, twilight, night, morning, sleep, moonlight, light, self-control and mercy to him who bows down to you. Oh the severeign of the gods! Oh you have eyes like lotus-petals, Be always with me! You are the store-house of all things dear to the devotees. Oh Durga! be helpful to me."

Thus when he prayed to the Goddess, Durga, She was pleased to present herself before the Swamiji and said "Oh Son! I am pleased with you. When Narayana himself had come out of the piller of the assembly hall for your sake it is but natural that I should also bless you. Fortunately I am the family deity and sou worshipped me Now also adopt me as your family deity and worship me. I shall be always at your back guarding you from all dangers. Now in future when religion declines in influence, I have been ordered by Hari to descend to the earth for the resuscitation of religion and culture. Till then people like you shall have to do the spade work for us. So our work is common and our aim is one and the same. As you have the full support of Vayudeva, you will win the love of the people and you rise to the status of a national saint. I shall be here doing the work of revival and regeneration of our sacred tradition through you. You just keep goat heads which are my emblem near the front door so as to face you. That will act against all evil forces even of diabolical nature. I do not expect anything more from you." Thus saying and assuring him all help she vanished.

Swamiji had felt instinctively What and intuitively was confirmed by Durga. His consciousness was now firmly established in the integration of the three separate parts of psychological and spiritual experiences which ail lent their light and warmth to his each and every action of the present time. The consolidated strength of the experience of three lives was felt in every word Shri Raghavendra spoke. Every problem was seen crystal clear in the spriritual flood light of the accumilated and consolidated knowledge of one stretch and of one layer. Because now Raghavendra Swami realised that he was Prahlada and Vyasaraya. Now his thougt had spiritual glint, his action had a settled direction and fulfilment followed his words as surely as day followed night Yet Raghavendra never arrogated to himself freedom and initiation His faith was that all was done by Hari. Now he saw Hari constantly before him-

CHAPTER XVIII

Raghavendra had achieved what he wanted to do during the eourse of this life. In the literarary field his success was grand Jayateertha's commentary was made more intelligible by the gloss and notes of Raghavendra. Geeta and Upanishadas, the basic works of Vedant, had been rendered easy for popular understanding, The tenets of other systams had been abridged and consolidated for an easy grasp. Vedas were elucidated following the esoteric method of Madhva Brahmasutras were broaght nearer to us by glosses and original works. He showed his versatility in composing Sankrit verses. His Gadya shows the grandeur of Sanskrit prose.

He brought about spiritual awakening among the people. This is borne out by the fact that he was the source of inspiration to both Pandits and laymen Many Dasas were there in his life time and after him, who dedicated their lives to the service of God and the good. He firmly established in the mind of the people that God exists and He responds to the call of people if it is sinceere and earnest.

Now the great work before him was to prove that the soul apart from the body, existed in it. So he thought of entering Brindawan with his body.

so that by coming out from Brindawan in astral body he would prove that there is the soul apart from the body.

Scientific atheism rules supreme now-a-days and Raghavendra thought of facing it by spiritual So he could do more work by retiring into the Brindavan than by living outside it-He could meet the people on the earth in their wakeful hours and in their dreams. Dream land is more free for spiritual activities than this hard earth which is bound by many limitations of space and time. Hence he thought of entering Brindavan on a fixed day Venkanna one day opened the topic in order to know what was there in the mind of the Swamiji But the Swamiji waved aside the topic by saying that God's will be done. Yet he asked Venkanna to keep every thing ready. "As you command" he said. He now was sure that Swamiji was determined to make the end of his life and he was steeped in deep grief

After some days he chose a good day. He called one of his disciples who was the grand-son of his elder brother Gururajacharya when he was a house holder. Now this man had no attachment to the world and wordly lutes. His name was Venkannachrya and he was made the spiritual heir to the throne of Vedant. His pontifical name

was Yogindrateerth. Raghavendra asked Venkannapant to treat the new Swamiji with as much respet as he treated the old Swmiji. Then Venkannapant got the village of Mantralaya transferred to the name of Yogeendrateerth.

As per desire of Swamiji Venkannapant built a Brindavan nicely chiselled and carved Raghavendra saw it and said,— "Venkannapant! keep this for some future Swamiji. Bring us a stone near Mahadwar which was rendered holy by the touch of Shri Ramachandra

Venkannapant got that stone and parts of Brindavan were accordingly chiselled out of it. A portion of the stone that remained was utilized to carve Pranadeva out of it.

As the time approached for the Swamiji to enter the Brindavan the people round about Mantralays were subjected to most painful excitement. There was no end to the grief of Venkanna Devotees round about the place hearing this news came in large numbers and saw the Swamiji and returned to their places, with heavy heart.

Now the Swamiji declared openly that he was going to enter the Brindavan on the second day of the dark half of Shrayana How was this possible? Is it not a miracle? They could not

understand Everybody's curiosity was excited to the highest pitch, But none had the courage to express it.

Any how the first day of the dark half of Sravana of the year Virodhikrit passed away. On the second day morning people's curiosity gave place to grief distressing even the minds of the indifferent and unsentimental. Because now they knew the earnest and honest Swamiji would enter the Brindavan and no longer be visible to them. On that day the Swamiji finished his morning religious rites as usual. Then he seated himself in Yogasana and called all his disciples, and delivered his valedictory message to them.

"Oh my favourite disciple! This is our last day. The time is come for us to depart. It seems you are all much grieved over this. But you need not surrender yourselves to sorrow. For uniting and departing are the rules of life in this world. But one thing we assure you, we are going to stay in this Brindavan for seven hundred years. We shall be vigilantly and jealously guarding the interests of all of you wherver you might be. We shall become visible to a gifted few when urgently needed. We must stay in this world by the order of Hari for many more hundred years, to do the work assigned to us. But we cannot stay bodily

outside beyond a certain limit as that would go against the rules of this life. Therefore we are going to enter the Brindavan bodily, We shall be highly pleased with you, when you do your duty sincerely, honestly fulfilling all obligations social, religious and political. There is no place in this world for scoundrels and indlers. Sooner or later they would be brought to books before the bar o divine justice. More than all these, love Shri Hari and you live happy. This is the message of Shri Krishna, of Shri Madhva and others who follow him. Save religion and it will save you? May God bless you with all things good!"

These last words went deep into their hearts Venknna was called and was asked to collect twelve hundred Saligrams which he most willingly did. That day there was arrangement for worship with special grandeur and pomp. Swamiji went through all iturgical rituals with unusual interest and devotion

It was now mid day. The day's worship was over Teetrha and Prasada were served to all with parting rice (coloured), He talked with some and enquired into others' private affairs. To some he gave parting message. Some aged parents complained about the behaviour of their sons and asked for solution. "Love them and leave them to

themselves." was the hint given in haste; yet it seems the only solution. A few waited for mantropadesha and received it. They found the mantra dinning in their ears even after a long time. Then his successor Shri Yogeendra was called and was given the parting message in regard to secular and sacred affairs. Last he called Venkannapant near him. He talked with him for some time more than with others. But it was all concerning more with his spiritual well being than with his mundane affairs

Then Raghavendra gave him directions to complete his entranee into the Brindavana. The Swami said-"our time is fast approaching. We shall enter the Brindavana and sit in Yoga posture and absorbing meditation. You build Brindavana with stones as we have directed you. When you reach as high as our head you keep all the holy saligrams on our head, and cover it with the closing stones. Spread the holy earth upon them and complete the work."

When it was exactly midday Shri Raghavendra walked to the Brindavana with a smiling face as if he were going on his usual tour. He ascended the steps and sat firmly in a posture of Yoga. He had his body decorated with twelve Marks of Vishnu and with garlands of flowers and Tulasi

already offered to Bhagavan. With a rosary of beads in his right hand and water pot in his left hand he sat. Then he began his holy breathing exercises in order to get control over respiration and through it over his senses. He withdrew all powers and faculties inward and kept steady his beloved idol of worship before his mind and poured his mind and spirit in a delightful groove Slowly the flow of consciousness was completely stopped from going outside and he became impervious to outside stimulants. Till at last he was established in complete meditative absorption.

The sound of pipe rose high in sweet musical notes keeping them to the beats of the drum. Brahmins recited hymns from the Vedas. Some recited other sacred books. Haridasas sang the greatness of Hari in charming songs. Others were absorbed in mute prayers of Guru and Hari Thus Shri Raghavendra entered the Brinavana bodily.

Shri Yogeendrateerth celebrated the Aradhana Mahotsava on a grand scale as per his Guru's orders. He also composed the last verse (चरमञ्जोक) in honour of his demise. It runs thus "A bow to Shri Raghavenrda who is a sun to dispel the darkness spread by bad systems of philosophy, and a moon to the lotuses of devotees of Vishnu, and who is very compassionate."

The star that had shone on the religious horizon for about halfa century set spreading a glorious display of spiritual hues in the sky of religious life He is a saint who has been working more since he diasppeared from the public view, than when he moved among them. His physical body found it hard to touch the heart of the people but his subtle body finds an easy access to the yearning hearts of the devotees. He found it difficult to approach us in our wakeful hour. But he easily slipped into our dreams where we were also free fo talk with him and move with him There in our dreams he exumes our buried past, exposes the future and lets us know exactly when certain things would happen. This assurance gives us courage and strength to bear the present ills of life, increasing our faith and confidence in him. Thus indirectly we are led more and more to the spirit from our material life. Hence the of Raghavendra is being done more efficiently after his entering the Brindavana

There was one disciple directly guided by him, named Appannacharya who was deeply devoted to his Guru. This pious pupil lived on the otherside of the river Tungabhadra in the village of Bichali-It being the rainy season, the river was in full flood and hence he could not cross the river in time

to witness the sacred self immolation ceremony of his beloved Guru. Still he was repeating the verses which he composed extempore while walking his anxious way to Mantralaya. A man of deep spiritual realisation intuitively found the Mantra dinning into his ears; and as he heard it he repeated it with his tongue. Thus when he resched the front door of the Brindavan he had. recited the last verse and stopped when he needed the last seven letters to complete it. The verse runs thus-(It consists of four lines) "He who" recites this panegyric poem, heavenly in merit, remembering the pair of feet of Raghavendra, will never meet with misery But by the grace of the Lord of Laxmi there will be fulfilment of his desire, his fame is spread in all directions and he will get unparalleled wealth" For the fourth line there were seven letters less and hence it was an incomplete poem. So Appannacharya doubly dejected stood before the Brindavan Sorrow suppressed him; grief affiicted him. Tears fell down in torrents. Harrowed and hacked he stood senseless. Raghavendra showed the first miracle From the Brindayan came out the seven words to fill up the gap of his disciple's verse. They were—"In this respect Narayana himself bears witness". In eulogising the greatness of the panegyric poem he had said that many

miraculons things would happen. But how to believe them? The reply is God Narayana himself stands witness to prove the truth of all that is stated in the Guru stotra. In all his Avatars God has shown many miraeles. To prove the words of Prahlad he came out of the pillar. When Gaiendra called him " Narayana, Guru of all. you Bhagavan. bow to you" Narayana ran to him for his rescue. When Draupadi helplessly called him to protect her honour and dignity of a woman, he was ready with endless yards of cloth-Narayana would put all this fame and name at stake in order to prove the truth of the statements made in the Guru Stotra. Hence this has been recognised as authorised Guru stotra of imperishable merit. This has been repeated and recited individually and in groups, hundred times thousand times and million times, after which gifts are richly showered upon the devotees Raghavendra stotra is as populer as Raghavendra. if not more

Thus ends the glorious life-history of the great soul who brought heaven nearer to the earth, who raised the status and value of human life, by giving deep meaning to existence on the earth Human destiny was brought nearer fulfiliment by showing a direct path to spiritual realisation. The life of greatmen if followed will make our lives sublime.



A NOTE TO GITA VIVRITI

(Gita Vivriti is a continuous dissértation directly based on Gita and many a commentary thereon and it is very faithful to the interpretation of Madhva and to the explanatory notes of Jayateerth and others who have gone before Raghaven Shri Madhva enlightend the tenets of Gita by his Gita Bhashya explanatory in method, and by Gita Tatparya that gives the gist without verbal elucidation. Though this suited the exigency of Madhva, bifurcation hindered the synthetic interpretation of Gita into a consistent and continuous discourse which would bring home to the reader's mind the right meaning of Gita. Raghavendra, hence, synthesised these two into one Vivriti or expository discourse. Madhva begins his interpretation of Gita with the eleventh verse in II adhyaya. So the first adhyaya and the ten verses of II adhyaya stand uniterpreted and unexplaind by Madhva and his disciple Raghavendra, in order to supply that need begins the work of explanation right from the first verse-Author)

SHRI RAGHAVENDRA'S WORKS CHAPTER I

Shri Vedavyasa blessed those that were forbidden access to the Vedas, with Mahabharat in order that they might attain Mukti through the knowledge of Dharma In the Mahabharat in Bhisma Parva there is the composition of Gita inserted in it. Gita is said to be the sweet essence of Mahabharat In the first six Adhyayas there is presented the means of knowledge, in the second six adhyayas knowledge is expatiated upon and third group of the last six Adhyays explains and expands what has already been told. In the first group of six Adhyayas, the first Adhyaya and ten verses in the second, prepare the ground for the presentation of Gita-tenets which are dealt with in the eleventh verse.

Dhritarastra, physically blind, mentally clouded and spiritually stunted, refuses to know the universally acknowledged fact that the Pandavas are the chosen of Bhagavan Shri Khrishna and fondly asks what on the holy ground of Kurukshetra his sons did when they met to fight. It is his fond hope that he would hear from Sanjaya the victory of his sons.

Sanjaya knowing Dhritarastra's intention began the narration of war: Duryodhana saw the Pandava's army and met Drona. He showed Drona the wonderful strategic array of the army of the Pandavas drawn skilfully by Dristadyumna. At the same time he pointed out the famous archers Virata and others who had gathered there with the firm determination of fighting on the side of the Pandavas. Then to institute a comparison of the enemy's army with his own, the defident Duryodhana mentioned the warriors who fought on his side like Drona, Bhishma, and others. He highly appreciated their self-sacrifice. loyalty, and skill in the use of various weapons and missiles.

Still Duryodhana felt dissatisfied with his army. So he expressed his doubt about his victory over the Pandavas. Yet staunchly resolving fighting to the finish, requested Drona to support that day's Generalissimo Bhishma, with the cooperative efforts of all the worriors of his side. He feard Bhima who protected the Pandava army with hereulian strength.

Duryodhana was over-come with deep dejection at the poor strength of his army. It resulted in his painful defidence Bhishma the Patriarchal Head of the Kuru Race, pitying Duryodhana's plight roared like a lion and blew his dreaded

conch to remove his killing doubt and dejection, and create confidence in their stead. Then the whole of the army blew and bet different instruments like horns and drums. A dinning noise rose and filled the earth and the sky.

The war like fury and excitement reached the army of the Pandavas and echoed and re-echoed with dreadful noise rising from the Pandava army Arjuna in his white-horsed chariot accompanied by Madhava, blew conches, as a suitable reply to the enemy's vociferous roarings and blowings and beatings This noise filled the earth and rent the skies and broke asunder the the hearts of the sons of Dhritarashtra.

Knowing that the Kauravas were bent on fierce fighting, Arjana asked his chrioteer Krishna to place his chariot in the midst of the two armies in order to know with whom he had to fight. From here begins the preparation of the background of dejection to create an occasion for the divine sermon. At the request of Arjana Krishna placed the chariot in the midst of the two armies, So that Arjana might see the great archers and charioteers of the enemy's army.

(Raghavendra while elucidating, supplies the gaps of motives or intentions, shows the gramma tical derivations and etymological meanings, and

beautiful definations of words like विषाद which is defined as विषादो नाम मोहनिमित्तकात् कोकात् यन्मनोदौबंल्यं यस्मिन् सित सर्वव्यापारोपरमो भवति स इति क्षेयम् । Dejectionis a mental breakdown coming through grief caused by ignorance and infatuation, and causing cessation of all activities. These are the assets of his gloss for which it is prized.

Arjuna saw in the army of the enemy his own relatives his own kith and kin, who had come with the intention of fighting and was suddenly overcome with great compassion and fell into deep dejection. When he saw his own people eager for fighting, his limbs, were severed as it were, his mouth faded, his body trembled and his hair stood on end.

(Reghavendra here fixed the meaning of सर्वति quoting षद्कृ विशरणगर्यव गदनेषु as विशोयंत्रे tear away or sever off in order to avoid repetetion with वेग्युइन शरीरे मे).

Arjuna trembled to see evil forebodings and to see no good coming out of slaying his own people. (Raghavendra believes that every vocative in the verse is significant and is not merely a synonym for Krishna or Arjuna. Here Keshava has been grammatically derived. केशन is नहारद्वान केश One who activates Brahma in his creation and Rudra in his work of destruction करन ईश्वरूप केशी ता

मृष्टचादिना वर्तयति इति व्युरपत्तेः। And then quotes authority हिरण्यगर्भः कः प्रोक्त ईशः शंकरएव व । सुरुटचादिना वर्तयितितौ यतः केशवो मवान् Hence Arjuna looks to Krishna for guidance. So the vocative is significant) The cause of Arjuna's grief is that the relatives, for whose happiness he is to conquer the kingdom, are standing there to fight risking their life love and lure. He was determined not to kill them though he would be killed. He saw earthly or heavenly by killing the no gain Kauravas. On the otherhand sin would accrue to him by murdering in cold blood his nearest relatives. They might be enemies; yet how would one be happy when one's own people are killed Murder of one's family results in great disaster to family customs and manners When righteousness is ovrpowered by unrighteousness, women are the first to be affected with it: for they become corrupted. This corruption leads to confusion of castes which paves the way for the family and the family-destroyers, to hell So these sinful deeds creating confusion are the cause for the utter ruin of family tradition which secures permanently a place in hell for the whole family. These words we have heard from our ancestors. Thus Ariun overcome with grief in utter confusion due to ignorance sank down on the seat of the chariot throwing away his bow and arrows.

CHAPTER II

Lord Shri Krishna hearing the words of objection of Arjuna asked him why he had been subjected at this crisis to this lowness of spirit, n t befitting the Aryans, throwing him hinderance to heaven and tarnishing his reputation. Then the Lord exhorted Arjuna to cast off faint-heartedness and to rise up to fight. How to strike Bhisma and Drona with arrows, though worthy of worship, was Arjuna's fear. Not being able to follow the Lord's trend of thought, Arjuna preferred a begging bowl to the killing of Gurus They are after material gains and it is a pity that he should aspire for those very gains smeared with their blood. Ariuna contended that brushing aside the question of sin, even if he would fight with them, victory was still pending and uncertain. conquer or to be conqured - which was better of the two, Arjuna did not know. Even a victory was not worth coveting: for he had to wade through fratricidal blood to gain victory. Thus overcome with doubt and fear and bewildered in judgement, unreservedly Arjuna surrendered to the will of the Lord for light and guidance

Lord Krishna laughing at his plausible arguments proceeded to resolve his doubts and to

restore his mind to normal peace in place of confusion and oscillation.

Here every Acharya before he begins to comment, gives an introductory summary of the whole work, he wishes to comment upon. Raghavendra refers to two commentaries of Madhva, Bhashya and Tatparya and prepares a succint epitome of these two elucidations of his Master and presents the core of them in his own way. The task before Vivriti is to consolidate coherently the findings of both Bhashya and Tatparya.

Madhva in his Bhashya first tells us the holy importance of Mahabhrta. It is a sacred book to the mass of people who are not fit to be initiated into the study of the Vedas. So it is raised to the height of the fifth Veda as it also opens the portals of the knowledge of Brahma through the knowledge of religious duties. Mahabharata serves also as elucidatory gloss on the Vedas and determines the meaning of the Vedas. Such a stupendous work could not be written by any other than God Vedavyasa Geeta is the essence of Mahabharata

Madhva in his Tatparya tells us that Arjuna was at a great height in spiritual elevation. He was Indra incarnate and was very dear to Krishna.

He beloged to kshatriya race and duties of a fighting soldier were enjoined on him His great duty was to vanquish those who hate Narayana and his followers. Arjuna through his affection for his relatives misunderstood this duty to be an impious act and swerved from it. So Geeta tells us that we shauld do our duty in a worshipful spirit devoted to God Narayan. Duty done other wise is an impious act. Madhva quotes profusely from Geeta to substantiate his views, and casually proves the supremacy of Lord Shri Krishna.

He also proves that Arjuna is a man of spiritual knowledge. This is not in compatible with his momentary ignorance which can be removed by authorised persons like Shri Krishna.

Now Shri Raghavendra combines these two introductory notes of Madhva into a sweet yet short introduction of his own.

We should do our duty because it is obligatory to us or because it pleases the Lord whose unparalleled greatness being realised lands us in unreserved submission to his will. To a Kristriya the obligatory duty is to crush the haters of Narayana and his followers. Through ignorance he understood this duty to be an inpious act-Lord Krishna through out the whole of Geeta tells him that war aginst Duryodhana and his

followers is a crusade against impious haters of God and his devotees and hence an obligatory duty of a Kshatriya. Now first Krishna tells him his grief and lamentation for the dying Kauravas is an unwise act.

For Arjuna grieves for those who do not deserve to be grieved for; an I he talks only the thoughts of his excited mind. The wise men do not grieve for those that are dying, as they do not, for those that are not dying The long submission of Arjuna pleading his inability to fight, does not follow the infallible reasoning of the wise. They never agree that vanquishing or suppressing the haters of God and his followers would be an impious act

Now Krishna wants to convince Arjuna the perversity of his argument. The grief of Arjuna for Bhishma, Drona and others, might be for destroying their soul or their body, or their being no soul other than the body; the soul becomes perished by the loss of the body; and hence the grief. Now Krihna disproves the first alternative by saying that the soul and the supreme soul are eternal and everlasting. They never come to ruin. The eternal individual s ul comes in contact with body-that is birth; disconnects himself with the body-that is death. But the supreme soul has no such birth and death. If one does

believe in the eternal and everlasting nature of Paramatman, then the soul is proved to be eternal using Paramatman as an instance of agreed truth. If that too is doubted then Krishna also must be included in those souls who are to be proved eternal. Here the Syllogism assumes this form. All souls being positive.

and beginningless are eternal and everlasting, (like primordial matter) Krishna and other souls are such souls, so they are eternal and everlasting.

Or the other form is

All souls being conscious and beginningless are eternal and everlasting (like Krishna the supreme soul), you and other Kings are such souls.

Therefore you and other kings are eternal and everlasting. So beginningless and eternal souls of Bhishma and others never die and they can never be grieved for.

Now the new alternative is that the bodies of Drona and others or going to be destroyed and hence the grief. Still the loss of bodies should not be the cause of grief. For we do not grieve when an infantile body goes and juvenile body comes, nor when the juvenile body goes and senile body comes. Because another body comes

in the place of the body that is lost. For loss is made good by equal gain. Then in death also there is no cause for grief; for there is the gain. ing of the new body for the dead body. There is another solace in death; For by death we get a new and fresh body in the place of an old and weak body. When we are satisfied at the loss of juvenile body for a worse substitute of an old body we cannot grudge death by which we are profitted with a better substitue of a new body in the place of an old body. Hence a wise man is never perplexed by death Still Arjuna may be grumbling that in the body of infancy and youth it is a condition that passes away While in the case of death it is the body in that condition that is lost. Hence there is grief at death. To this Krishna's. implied rejoinder is that in practical life due to the stress of the need and of utility we make a bargain of a piece of cloth in exchange for a golden coin.

It is only a conscious soul in a body that can make a reference of youth and age to its self and an insentient body cannot make any such reference, with regard to itself. This intelligent reference to one self that "I who was an infant, am now a youth" can be made only by sentient soul other than the body. In our mental life this

is our constant reference to our self in which we posit the existence of some sentient being other than body and senses. This one soul has experience of many states of body and mind. In the same manner this one soul suffers many transmigrations of body. The materialists contend that there !s no soul other than the body and body itself marks reference to itself in such mental recognitions. But men well versed in this philosophical art are not sidetracted by plausible arguments.

Raghavendra here omits certain things from Tatparya and Bhashya. For he finds it difficult for common people to understand those things at this stage, while what is stated briefly in those two, he expands and expres es at large This is what a real commentary is expected to do

In spite of all what has been put forth by Krishna, Arjuna cannot come to see eye to eye with him. For death of Drona and Bhishma and others is a personal loss to him. Arjuna would forego the pleasure of their company by their death. And besides he would be put to grief to see their mangled and defaced body Lord Krishna sympathetically followed the contention of Arjuna and told him that he had no genuine reason even for that fear. For the popular belief

that object coming in contact with their respective senses cause grief or joy is not a complete truth and a scientific truth. Sense-contacts along with self centred attachment to those objects cause pain or pleasure to man. The egoistic tendency in man which imposes 'my' and 'mine' upon those objects, is roused in man by sense contacts and causes grief or joy. For in the absence of this attachment to the object as in sleep and swoon, there is the touch contact with the objects. Yet the sense contact does not yield either joy or grief. In sleep other senses are not awake; but touch is alive to contact.

So the sense contacts causing sensitions of cold and heat are only passing in nature and not abiding. They cause grief through attachment Arjuna should get over this attachment and then these sense-contacts would lose their sting and flit harmlessly.

Even then there lingers a doubt still in the mind of Arjuna For if one's aim is to be free from grief, why one should fight and then through non-attachment, why one should try to be free from the grief? There is the easier way to be griefless. One should not fight at all and then there is no cause for grief.

Shri Krishna condemns this defeatism of Arjuna and instils in him a positive attitude of fighting. Now the non attachment in itself forms one of the values in life a d it must be vigorously pursued. The occasion for non attachment arises only in the context of doing and fighting and such other sense contacts. Krishna, therefore calls Arjuna a Purusha. He is one who is alive to sense impressions. When one is thus afflicted by sense impressions, he must face them bravely through non attachment and indiffernce to pleasure and pain alike. Then he gets rid of all these turmoils and becomes eligible for spiritual freedom.

Raghavendra beautifully expresses the attitude of indifference to pain and pleasure. This man curbs the influence of pleasure and pain. Pleasure results in puffing up with conceit. Pain creates dejection. Both are imposters and they should not be relied on. Pleasure is as much an impediment to that sober spiritual life, as pain is. He who cultivates this attitude of indifference to pain and pleasure, will attain that sedate life. No doubt this sort of unruffled life is to be found in deep sleep which is not the emancipated life. So in wakeful life if one can show self-control and indifference to pleasure and pain, then there is

spiritual awakening in him, and that leads to emancipation.

Nor need Arjuna fear sin from fighting. For virtue never causes grief and vice never causes happiness. And fighting is in the present context, to punish those heretics who hate God and his followers. As this is a virtue of the first order there is no question of sin accruing from fighting Seers of repute have seen with their own eyes the end or effect of these two: Good and evil. Good never leads to misery and evil never produces happiness.

Raghavendra some times surprises us by giving double interpretations. Both of them are given different contextual reference Some time before, it was argued that even Krishna should be proved to be eternal on the ground that he is beginningless. But the general rule that he who is beginningless is eternal is not warranted by any instance. Now an instance in which there is the concomitance of beginninglessness and eternity is supplied. That thing which is beginningless and eternal is the primordial Prikriti. It has no beginning and no destruction. In the same manner Brahman also has neither beginning nor end. And evidence is the tradition of the wise which has confirmed beginninglessness and

endlessness of Prikriti and Brahma Krishna further tells us that, that which is spatially all pervasive is eternal; for instance the letters like अ and क and uneffected sky (अन्याकृत अ काश) These are also beginningless When they have no end, no body can bring about destruction of them

Now a fundamental doubt arises in the mind of Arjuna. The individual soul is the reflection through the medium of body, just as the face is reflected in the medium of glass. Hence it can be easily argued that the individual souls are not eternal as they are essentially reflections through desructible medium of bodies like the reflections of faces in the looking glasses

To this objection Lord Krishna replies that the embodied souls are eternal though bodies are perishable. But these perishable bodies are not the reflecting mediums; the souls have everlasting mediums hence they are eternal, unlike the faces in the perishable medium of a looking glass

we must also note that the souls are eternal because the original reflected in the eternal medium has an everlasting contact with the medium. Hence the reflected image cannot but be eternal. Even the possibility of severance of this contact cannot be hoped, for the original is all pervasive and thus the reflected images, the souls, are eternal.

All these arguments melt down to this; The souls are eternal and the bodies though perished get fresh substitutes and the grief caused by the loss of the body can be soothed by renouncing attachment. Threfore Arjuna! War is a kind of worship of the Lord Hence you should fight

Even then some doubt still lurks. In what respect Hari is superior to the individual soul as both are equal in point of eternity? This needs a careful analysis of the soul. Reflector, Hari and reflected soul and medium the essence of the soul, the contact of reflector and the medium are all eternal and hence the soul cannot kill and cannot be killed. For souls are all dependent and they cannot do anything independently. In the same way the Lord also cannot kill the eternal souls.

Thus it is settled that souls being eternal have no birth or death and the Lord also comes under the same category; and he is more than that. For he has not even bodily birth and death which has raised him to the status of independence; while the souls suffer from bodily birth and death and hence stigmatized as dependents. The Lord on the other hand descends into this physical world on universal errands; but not with physical

body and set up. He incarnates in pristine purity of coniousness and bliss though in human form. His spiritual essence is never soiled with the touch of physical birth and death. While the souls transmigrate from body to body in endless chain till finally released from this physical encumbrance. Hence they have no claim to independence of killing or being killed.

In order that we may be convinced of the truth of difference between the soul and its case body. Krishna gives new instances: Just as a man accepts new robes casting away the old ones, so also the embodied soul rejects old and worn out bodies and accepts new ones in their place.

Lamentation and misery at the death of a man are unavoidable. Hence Arjuna may plead his inability to fight But Krishna says that birth and death are merely change of new dress in the place of old ones and hence they need not cause misery

Jeeva being reflective in nature and the medium of reflection being eternal, there need not be any cause for lamentation. Yet with a more powerful missile just as Daksha's heads were cut off, the jeeva might be destroyed. But even this contengency is not possible For the

soul is not vulnerable to any missiles and weapons; fire cannot burn it, water cannot drench it.

To give an opportunity to the reader to have estimation of Raghavendra's method of elucidation a leaf from Vivriti is translated "This soul is not fit to be cut. Why? Because he is eternal, all pervading, unchangeable. eternity goes with all pervasiveness. When there is an attributive adjunct to a qualified word, the attribute not connected with a noun goes to the adjective. So eternity should be taken with all pervasiveness. 'One having everlasting pervasiveness' is the ultimate meaning. Unchanging is without any change caused by any agency. The word 'everlasting' already used connotes changelessness in general, while 'un changing' means 'without any change caused by an agency'. Hence there is no repetition. 'Motionless' means 'without physical motion'.

applicable to 'God' For God is said to possess manifold powers Though God is said to be Unchangeble', yet his agency is compatible with his changelessness on account his superhuman and inconceivable power. But we should not explain it by the reason of the influence of illusion or maya as others have done. Here a doubt arises

that it is well that we say God is eternal, and all pervasive. But how can we attribute these things to Jeeva? Hence identity of God and soul is not possible. To this objection Shri Raghavendra replies that the objection is true. As real identity is not possible the rule that when two words are put in the same case and yet they are not identical then it shows that they are similar, is applicable here. So 'God is soul' means they are similar when identity is not possible, between them. Hence soul is similar to God that is eternal and all pervasive That means the soul is the reflection of God that has all these qualities. How does this statment prove invulnerable nature of human soul? Yes, there is an invariable rule that the image and the reflected object, if there is nothing to prove the contrary, have common qualities and hence the soul also is unchangeable like God.... Now if there is fullfledged similarity between these two then how it is that God is to be worshipped? It is because Jeeva is ever dependent on God who is eternal and all pervasive Sanskrit allows wonderful interpretations on account of different kinds of dissolutions of sandhi and compounds सर्वगतस्थाणुः can be dissolved as(1) मर्नगत and स्थाणः or (2) सर्वगतस्थ and अण्: So God is all parvasive while Jeeva is atom like. Hence there is dissimilarity between the two So there is no full fledged similarity, because Jeeva is always dependent on Hari Jeeva never ceases to be dependent on him. For he is tied down by injunctions and prohibitions; (सनातनः नादेन विधिना पेदरूपशब्देन सह वतंते इति सनादः सनाद एव सनातनः) and hence he is ever dependent on God.

Soul is atom-like and depends upon God Hari is all pervasive. But the soul does not experience this: because God is invisible. He is said to have body or form and yet he is unmanifested because he is endowed with inconceiveable and wondrful powers and hence he manifests himself whenever he desires. Now after all this critical discussion it is concluded that we must know Jeeva to be eternal and indestructible. For Jeeva cannot be destroyed by the destruction of its medium (as told before) or by curse or by weapons. So we should not weep for him. Or God Hari is eternal, all pervasive and unchangeable and hence independent. So He alone can fulfil the highest aim of our life, removing our sorrows and miseries. We must realise Him that is uumanifested, by performing the duties that are assigned to us. Fighting is Arjuna's chief duty and hence he should not lament.

We may grant that souls are immortal, yet Arjuna has cause for grief. Because they are not immune from death and birth Every soul is connected with a body and that is birth; and parts with it and that is death. This goes on till final emancipation. Though Arjuna does not kill their souls yet destroys their bodies. Hence he has cause for grief. We may remove this objection by saying that one need not revolt against the unavoidable. What can we do against the inexorable law of nature but to reconcile ourselves to its decree?

Shedding down emotion that has shrowded death if we can see through life and death, we find that it is all the play of causal law. Bodies emerge from Matter and before that they are un manifest. They are mainifest between birth and death, as effects. They are then reduced to matter at death. Then why so much fuss about death?

But the chief architect behind this play of matter is God Hari He is omniscient and independent. There is no other like him. Very few see him as he is Only the pious and devoted see and talk about him with wonder. Yet they do not understand him fully as he is unfathomable and inconceiveable. So the sages talk about him as wonderful and marvellous. For they are struck dumb at his

glory and greatness. Such sages who really understand the genuine nature of God Hari are also rare, and cause surprise whenever they are met with.

It must be also noted that even the eternality of Jeeva is not natural but is at the sufference of God Hari Hence Jeeva has no independence. Hence Arjuna! There need be no trembling; for a kshatriya there is no greater good than righteous war. For war is worship of Shri Hari. When good luck is waiting at his door. Arjuna should not discard it. It is at the sweet will of God, that such war is available for a kshatriya to enter into heaven by fighting. Only the blessed get such an opportunity to fight and thus worship Hari and get his grace.

If on the other hand Arjuna is obdurate and does not fight, there will be serious consequences. His name will be tarnished for not fighting a battle and retreating from war. He will get sin for avoiding his duty. Then his disgrace will be a topic for public talk. This ill reputation is worse than death. No body will understand his altruistic considerations and talk contemptuous words and think that he has run from the battle field to save his life. Arjuna will be in a wretched

condition as his detractors will be very harsh upon him.

Now Lord Krishna presents a dilemma to Arjuna. Apparently it means that if Arjuna is killed he will get heaven and that if he conquers he will enjoy the sovereignty over the earth. In any case he should fight. But the dilemma usually is a weak argument logically and can be easily rebutted. In order to remove this weakness Shri Madhva in his Bhashva has added conditions. Before that we must know how this dilemma is rebutted "If Arjuna is killed he will not get the sovereignty over the earth. If he will conquer he will not get heaven; hence for any reason he need not fight." In order to avoid the chance of rebutal Shri Madhva and following him Shri Raghavendra adds conditions to the two horns. The altered dilemma then becomes logically impregnable "if Arjuna is killed he will get heaven and (in the next birth) he will also get sovereignty of the earth (when alive), if not killed earth now and heaven (after death). There fore in both the alternatives there is something positive to be achieved and hence with firm resolution he should be ready to fight.

Besides Arjuna should leave this commercial attitude of profiteering. This is rank materialiem.

His attitude should be altruistic. There is a definite spiritual gain, and he should fight for that. Pleasure and pain, profit and loss, honour and dishonour are the cruel couples that squeeze man between the two. Leaving this calculating spirit he should rise to that next key of sin and religious merit. He should confrom to religious injunctions and prohibitions and avoid sinful deeds and perform righteous deeds Then he will not be sadwitched between the cruel pairs. But that too is not a final stage in which the devotee completely surrenders to the will of God Hari, and does his duty as worship of Hari and his satisfaction and grace are the final rewards of a seeker. This attitude is highly spiritual calculated to bring about complete revolution in the aspirant. He does not want any material gain. He only wants the gracious smile of Shri Hari showing his satisfaction with the work of the devotee. For that opens the gate of knowledge by dispelling the darkness.

Now so far what that knowledge is, is described to him. Lord Krishna now presents before him what the means are to achieve that knowledge. Knowledge of Brahma and Jeeva is essential for spiritual realisation; and that has been already described. Henceforward the means of that

spiritual elightenment are described. That means is doing one's duty disinterestedly in the spirit of worship of Vishnu. This path of disinterested work in an worshipful spirit is highly praised for its efficacy and its joy.

On this path of duty or work, even the beginning or the initial effort does not go without its return or reward. Having begun it if there is a break or if other obligations are not fulfilled there is no adverse effect or sin. On the other hand even a little, done in the spirit of worshipful duty saves one from the great terror of wordly life.

Formerly at the beginning of the 2nd Adhyaya Lord Krishna talked about the knowledge of the soul. Now begins the discussiong of the means of knowledge of Brahman. This is really inconsistent. But this objection is not sound: for it was said that the soul was to be known as the image of Brahman. Hence it was now consistent to narrate means of knowing, the soul as the reflection of Paramatman. Paramatman also becomes the object of knowledge and his knowledge is the result of disinterested and dedicated work done in a worshipful attitude. For winning the love of God by such worshipful work results in his grace which is the key to God Hari's knowledge.

Even in the context of Jeeva, God Hari becomes unavoidably fit to be known. Hence means of knowing Hari also must be necessarily discussed and then adopted. Thus there is no inconsistency.

We find this field is crowded with amazingly varied and various means of knowledge But it is not difficult to choose the grain from the chaff. The clue, to choose the sound grain is given here A statement which bases its decision on indisputable evidence is always bound to describe one means only Such a statement warrants us the performance of duty to please God Hari But statements not wedded to real evidences of unquestioned authority are manifold and make contrandictory ltterature. There is self contradiction in unverified truths; but this cannot be the case with truths tested by evidences.

We do not mind if there be difference and conflict between Vedic and non-vedic religions. But in the very fold of Vedic religion there is keen difference of opinion regarding the means. So some say that our deeds are meant to give us heaven and other temporary pleasures. While Lord Krishan tells us to do our duty disinterestedly and devoted to God

Hari. So it goes very difficult for sincere souls to choose between the two. Lord Shri Krishna replies that such schools are only pretentious Vaidiakas and they cannot claim genuine adherence to the vcdas and their teaching. For such pleasure - seekers indulge in superficial meaning and are inclined to an easy life of pleasure. Hence even after death they wish to continue this pleasure - seeking activity and prostitute Vedas by finding a teaching of this kind in them. Vedas teach, they say, that one wishing to get a seat in Swarga should perform sacrifice. Such attempts land them in worldly Karma and rewards: Thus addicted to pleasures, they do not get higher joys by spiritual attainments; and do not enjoy mental peace through dedicated service to God.

So Lord Krishna insists that Arjuna should not listen these Vedic materialists who propound that Vedas give material joys made up of three gunas. He should not be fascinated by the pairs of opposites. He should be firmly established in the Eternal being He should not try to acquire or preserve what the shastras forbid. He should always seek the protection of the Lord.

Here another instance of Raghavendra's skill in splitting the word to get a beautiful meaning is found. Arjuna is asked to become निस्त्रेगुण्य while Vedas are said to be त्रेगुण्यविषयः One meaning is that(1) Vedas apparently seem to propound that the people should do Karma which vields the fruit of heaven and other material pleasures. Hence Arjuna is asked not to entertain any thought of heaven and other material pleasures. Now the second interpretation is: (2) the word is split as नेगुण्यति+ष+प and is made to mean material pleasures and heaven are a sort of self-killing poison (विष): and vedas in their real meaning take you away from such poison and lead you to knowledge of essential nature of Paramatman which is our settled aim So Ariuna should not entertain any thought of these physical pleasures.

Shri Raghavadra here shows his deep knowledge of grammar and ctymology; नैगुण्य एवं विषं, नैगण्यविषं यापणित अवगमयन्ति Now he derives grammatically विषय as above explained. He quotes rules for it In विषय the root या is used in the casual form; but the sign of casual प is not to be found. It is अन्तगीत or understood And if there is no prepositional prefix to the root the ending आ becomes अ (क). Thus the

word बोषय is made to yield the meaning, "That which causes poison to go". Raghavendra takes trouble to remove the doubt that Vedas teach pleasure-seeking life. They really teach that God Hari alone is the chief import of the Vedas So vedas need not be rejected. The Lord advises Arjuna ever to remember that Hari is his master. The ultimate meaning is "Arjuna should not seek or harbour condemned pleasures He should not be in the iron grip of the cruel pairs. He should understand Vedas as teachtg Bhagavan to be the means of realising the highest aim of life-They do not teach you to seek mean material pleasures You should constantly meditate upon the thought that Hari the abode of enviable qualities is your Lord. This is the course prescribed to get the essential knowledge for the final emancipation.

Now this Vedic hedonism suffers from lack of knowledge as it admits no meditation. Hence it was eondemned. But even the protagonists of knowledge labour under the same sort of disadvantage. For these apostles of knowledge do not get the pleasures of heaven and other things, So there is no reason to prefer knowledge to fruit yielding action

The objection is baseless. For all Purposes of water, like bathing and other things are served as much in a well as in the vast collection of sea water. So also all desires of heaven and other pleasures are fulfilled by God-vision attained by intuitive knowledge as much, as by fruit yielding action Fruit of knowledge is vast and all inclusive like the water of ocean while result of fruit yielding action is very limited like the water of the well. Thorefore fruit yielding action is condemned as it yields only small and perishable results; while knowledge takes us to a great fruit of abiding interest. This is the reason for preference of knowledge over fruit yielding action.

Raghavendra gives us an alternate meaning which, though intricate in derivation is yet interesting in meaning. Repose or rest in heaven is to be obtained by sacrifice and other fruit yielding actions. This is the apparent meaning which is condemned. Vishnu is to be realised by knowledge which is a specific remedy against the poison of pleasure-seeking inclination. This Vishnu is the real meaning of Vedas and he is to be propitiated by renunciation of fruit of action which has a unique result.

When Paramatman is pleased one gets the two fold aim Dharma and Moksha. The same fruit

is realised by one who knows all Vedas with their special meaning that heaven and other pleasures are mentioned in Veda for the attraction of the beginners, and the real meaning is Paramatman For such a knower even Karmas yield the same fruit. Therefore Arjuna is forbidden to be enticed by the apparent meaning of material pleasures. उदयाने and सर्वत:संप्लुतोदके are interpreted in a different way. उदपान is said to mean God Hari, who stands alone in the flood of deluge-Raghavendra supplies the etymological derivation of उदगान. उत् for the reason of excitment उप for the reason of lack of protectors अनद्य for the reason of activity God Hari has his qualities made acute and has no other protector to him and Time and other things, while standing in the floods of deluge. When Hari is pleased one gets all the highest prizes of life, and spirit So this Bhagavan is the chief import of the Vedas.

Why is this fruit yeilding Karma despised when there is a clear injunction in the Veda that one desireous of heaven must perform a sacrifice Veda, commands us not only to perform sacrifice but to entertain a desire. One may object that this brings a split in the sentence by creating two objects for the injunction. But really speaking there is only one object for injunction and that is

sacrifice with the desire of getting heaven. So the first objection stands good.

Lord Krishna says that a seer of any caste or stage of life should aspire to do his duty. He need not entertain any desire for heaven. For only Karma, is enjoined on him and no desire. In the Veda if one does not do his duty there is objection. But there is no objection if one does not entertain any desire.

Therefore the Vedic injunction makes a statement of desire and enjoins sacrificial work. So, as desire is not enjoined we should not cherish any desire for fruit of action. Then one may object, why all this fuss about nothing in the end Let us stop doing our duty. Then there will be no occasion for desire of fruit.

But Geeta tells us that we should not be addicted to fondness for in-action. Still we must know that mind cannot completely be devoid of any desire. Such a mtenal vacuum is an impossibility. Hence only prohibited or unworthy desire should be eschewed and worthy ones should be substituted in their place. Desire for God realisation, devotion, sacrifice, service are all praise worthy.

Lord Krishna admonishes Arjuna to be firmly established in his practices of means of

attaining knowledge. Only he should not be attached to fruit. He must keep up the balance of his mind in success and failures. For equanimity with sacrifice is called Yoga.

The path of the knowledge is far superior to the path of action Therefore we must take to the path of knowledge They are really pitiable who work with the object of getting some return for it Or if knowledge is superior to action let us have the knowledge of identity of Brahman with Jeeva-But this idea is set aside for even after realisation one must submit to Vishnu Those who think that they are one with God are pitiable because they will be condemned to hell

Arjuna is now called upon to exert himself for Yoga. One possessing knowledg or Godvision rejects both the effects of sin and merit. He fully rejects the influence of sin. He also rejects the harmful influence of punya which clogs his spiritual well being. But that effect of punya which is produced by such holy things as worship he will not reject, for it will conduce to the increase of knowledge and joy in that final stage of mukti. Therefore he should apply himself, to Yoga Yoga is a skill in work, which is undertaken to propitiate God Hari without any attachment to fruit and with knowledge of God

Shri Raghavendra often exposes the subtle implications which are genuinely based on the original text and which require a keen insiglit to disclose them. The Lord now explains the means and end of knowledge. "Having renounced the fruit of the work" has a beautiful implication. It means that the seeker first renounces the very desire for fruit of the work and then performs the deed in a spirit of dedication to God Hari-This is the means or Yoga which he implements to attain knowledge of the Lord Hari through the study of Shastras or sacred disquisitions. So much about the means of knowledge. Then he becomes God-visioned and being released from the bond of birth attains the stage of unalloyed bliss. This much about the end.

One would be inquisitive to know how long the aspirant should continue this vow of doing deeds, without entertaining any desire of fruit in a dedicatory spirit. The Lord replies that when the aspirant's mind gets complete immnuity from puzzling confusion due to ignorance, then he attains the benefit of future study and past study. Now Raghavendra explains the process of spiritual discipline or Yoga. The vow of disinterested work which leads to knowledge conducive to emancipation is the

direct cause of knowledge. While the traditional means of knowledge which are hearing, thinking, and meditating bring about purification of mind, enhancing the ingradient of Sattva in it, through accumilated effect of one's attempts. This course of discipline should be followed till one is free from erroneous knowledge, and till one gets valid knowledge

Now we must know what that erroneous knowledge is and how to get rid of it. This is merely an expatiation of the previous statement When the aspirant has not yet a settled opinion. of reality on the level of mediate knowledge (परोक्षज्ञ:न) he gets from Veda conflicting views. He studies closely the sacred texts and arrives at the right conception of reality. Then the mind is not invaded by confusing doubts and is settled in equipoise. After that the mind sinks in absorbing meditation. When meditation reaches the stage of imperviousness to outside world there is direct contact with the highest reality. He will then be immersed in a deluge of delight which prevents the mind from wavering even at the beatings of the drum Then the aspirant by reaching such a stage attains the fruit of his attempts. If Yoga is sought in an earlier stage, its period terminates

with settled knowledge of Parmatman on the levelof mediate knowledge obtained from Shastras. The firmness of mediate is to be tested by the lack of doubts arising from the attacks of heretic scriptures. In this stage if an aspirant follows the Yoga of disinterested work, its period terminates with unwavering concentration in which direct contact with Bhagavan is established The final stage of thhis Yoga is imperviousness to beatings of drum and other things.

Arjuna is really fascinated by the mention of the highest stage of Samadhi and he wants to know how a man who has attained that stage is to be recognised. He is also curious to know how he moves and acts. He does act though he has attained direct contact with God Hari. Arjuna could not understand how to reconcile activity with mental poise, and concentration.

So Lord Krishna first tells Arjuna the chief marks of a man of concentration. The characteristic mark of such a Yogi is that his mind is completely bereft of Desires and passions which infest the mind and clog spiritual activity. He fixes his mind on Paramatman and is satisfied with his gracious dispensation.

Then he is called a man of God vision Only such desires as would hinder direct contact with God Hari are discarded. So a Seer is one who has removed all conflicting desires and is settled in a concentration of God Hari. One aspiring for God-vision and one settled in God vision both renounce desires and passions as they hinder the spiritual activities. But in the case of the aspirant they are removed with much effort while with the proficient, easily and naturally there is immunity from them

This man of fixed consciousness is unaffected in troubles, with no hankering after joys and pleasures, and he has got rid of attachment, fear and anger. Raghavendra gives beautiful and brief definitions. Raga or attachment is defined as 'false attribution of goodness to evil things (अशोभने शोभनाव्यास:). This man, attached to anything higher nor hates nor rejoices, coming by good or evil This man of firm resolution easily and without effort with draws his senses from their objects just as the tortoise, naturlly withdrws its limbs. By force, if one seeks abstamiousness or refrains from things of pleasure, then there will be no physical contact of those things; but the hankering of the mind about those pleasures is not stopped. A fasting man stops eating of food But that hankering after pleasures, only a man who gets god-vision, can stop

Self-control requires a lot of effort. In this psychological operation the five outside senses and the sixth inside mind are engaged five senses have no independent role in the attraction of the objects of pleasure. The senses are only attracted when mind becomes strongly inclined towards the objects. A man of self control does not allow his senses to be attracted by the objects of pleasure. Only when the mind is strongly bent upon a thing there is attract-But a man of self control, even when the mind is enticed by the objects stands firm and does not develop any attachment. Then the soul is not disturbed, or upset. This is self-control-In brief this self control is of two kinds. One is by getting control over the capacity of the senses and the other by detachment of the mind. These two are won by the aspirant through physical refraining from objects and by the man of godvision through god vision only. Hence this course of self control is very difficult. For, senses of even a learned man who is attached to his body. drag the mind by force; they get the contact of the objects, make the mind favourably inclined to those objects and voluptuousaly attached to them. These senses are very powerful and unconquerable, and throw the mind into convulsions. Hence self control or mastery over one's senses is very difficult to be achieved. Simple efforts like fasting have some effect on the senses.

Yet consistent and continuous efforts win mastery over the senses. But the chief effort to win full mastery over senses is to have firm faith in the supremacy of God Hari and to apply the mind to the concentration of Hari. Fasting and other courses of discipline are secondary means. The result of this herculian effort is god-vision. A man of god-vision alone has mastery over senses, and his consciousness cannot be shaken.

It is interesting to know how a man goes to ruin when led by passions. Constantly thinking upon objects of pleasures, a man becomes attached to those things. Attachment leads to an intense desire, and love. The passionate love if thwarted results in furious indignation which causes infatuation. This infatuation again brings about impairment of power of discrimination. When one does not know to distinguish good from bad, really one is destined to ruin

If self indulgence opens the way to ruin, self-restraint takes us up to knowledge and Godvision Being free from attraction and repulsion

senses enjoy objects with mind self possessed. Then the man remains undisturbed When the mind is thus settled in peace all miseries melt away. Thus knowledge is firmly established in his mind.

When there is no mental equipoise mind cannot concentrate; without concentration there cannot be meditation Without meditation there is no god-vision. And without god vision there is no emancipation Without emancipation there is no unalloyed happiness.

If on the other hand mind is let loose to follow the wandering senses then, this wandering takes away wisdom just as wind takes away a boat on water.

So to recapitulate the whole argument, Prasada or mental repulsion from sense-objects comes from self-restraint. After Prasada there is concentration of mind. A man of concentration alone can undergo a course of hearing, thinking and meditation. From this course results the clear knoledge of reality. With a clear and settled knowledge of reality you can meditate on it, for god-vision. Therefor: self control in due course assures us firm establishment in wisdom-

Raghavendra in his Vivriti often supplies us with connecting links especially questions and answers So here he does that work beautifully so as to bring together all the threads of thougts. First a seer's characteristic mark was asked. Then Shri Krishna in four verses told who a seer was Then it was objected that such a seer was an impossibility. Nine verses explained clearly how or how far a seer was possible. Then all was concluded in a verse. It was asked why a man of god-vision completely satisfied with what he has, is engaged in activities like speaking. That question is now replied. This is also a definition of a seer collecting together, in one verse, all that has been told in many verses

"That which is a dark night to all beings, is a wakeful day to a man of self-control. That which is a wakeful day to common people is a dark night to a seer"

Just as one is not conscious of any thing while he is asleep by night so also common people do not know anything about the nature and the greatness of Paramatman. But a seer and a man of self control is quite awake to the form and nature of Brahman, as one is wakeful by day and is awake to everything he comes in

contact with. But common people are quite alive to objects of pleasures and hence it is a day to them. But men of god vision are averse to these objects of pleasures and hence it is dark night to them.

Their activities in this world can be explained thus: - A candidate for Mukti has Karma to his credit. Till that is wiped away he is not eligible for Mukti But Karma is of three kinds: संवित that which has been accumulated since long अलामि that which is to be credited to his account in future. प्रारच्य that which has been begun to be enjoyed. After god-vision both संचित & आगामि are made null and void. But प्रारब्ध must be exhaust ed by actual enjoyment. Hence प्रारब्ध often hinders Mukti even after god vision. When this vision is clouded by Prarabdha he behaves like a common man and finds wordly motive for his activity. So a real seer is one who at all times has his mind devoted to the thought of God Hari This is the definition of a Seer other than gods. For they have duties of guiding an i controlling ordinary people. If they stop their work the world will collapse as there will be no activity and motion But still there exists categorical difference between the activity of the common man and that of a seer however much his vision might be clouded by his Prarabdha Karma.

Objects of desire seek entrance into the seer just as waters flow into the ocean and yet the sea is not affected thereby. That man alone gets salvation; and not one hankering after desies.

A seer is engaged in activities which are essentially required for living in this world remaining unruffled by the results of his activities. This is possible because he is not attached to his body. He is not a slave to his senses. He stands like a rock unmoved by violent storms. Though he is in the world, he is not of it, This is a man, others are mere beasts.

This is the description of a man of godvision. Having attained this stage, one is not affected by the pains and pleasures of life. Even in the grips of death he will not stop meditating upon god Hari. Then after giving up his body he attains emancipation.

But a subtle point should be noted in this context. A man, after god-vision gets emancipation after that very life in which he had attained that vision, only when there is no hindrance of Prarabdha Karma. If one is beset with it, he will be born as many times as is necessary to expiate those influences. But once there is god-vision salvation is assured sooner or later.

CHAPTER III

At the beginning of each chapter Raghavendra summarises the previous chapter and connects that summary with the present chapter showing the continuity of thought. In the second chapter the nature of God and soul is dealt with and then means to that knowledge of God and soul is dilated upon at greater length. In this chapter the same means of knowledge vizibisinterested and devoted work is expatiated upon in greater detail,

Some phrases and statements of the Lord have given scope for the doubt of Arjuna which he lays before the Lord. In the previous chapter the Lord made such statements as "knowledge is far superior to action and the meanminded aspire for the fruit of action." From this Arjuna thought that knowledge is superior to action in the opinion of the Lord. So why should the Lord ask him again to get involved in the military action of war. Arjuna's argument is that war is fruit – yielding action as heaven is said to be the reward for fighting in the war. Therefore war is far inferior to kn wledge. While ascetics have no reward for the practices of austere penance. The ascetic

is enjoined to see God practicing self-control and faith and devotion to God. Therefore an ascetic's action ends in God - vision which is knowledge of the perfect kind. Hence Arjuna pleads for robes of ascetics instead of cloaks and armour of a warrior Besides the Lord talked of war sometimes as leading to knowledge and at other time 1 ading to heaven. This confusing talk threw Arjuna into doubt. If it is the Lord's intention that war, fought with intention and motives would lead to heaven, and fought without any regard for fruit, would lead to knowledge, then why not accept holy orders and directly get knowledge? This is the cause of confusing doubt. Therefore Arjuna requests the Lord to give him definite direction and unambiguous guidance in the matter

The Lord explains that all actions done in the first three stages of life (student life, house - holder's life, retired life) are of two kinds. Action done with motives, and actions done disinterestedly without any specified motive except that of worship of God. But the actions done by a man in the fourth stage (ascetic life) are only actions done without any motives, and they never lead us to hell as war does; because war is impelled by passions and violent impulses. Now Lord's contention is that ascetic stage is prescribed to those who are fit for it. Arjuna has a pecular eligibility like Janaka and Priya Vrita to wage war with impounity from its evil effects. Only he should fight renouncing fruit and remaining unaffected by success or failure. War is a duty assigned to a Kshatriya and Arjuna must fight it in a duty-bound spirit with dedicated devotion to God. This is Lord's reply in a nut shell.

The same is explained in detail by the Lord, in the verses to follow Man is a bundle of cognitions, connations, and volitions So all the three (knowledge, feeling, and willing must be attuned to God-realisation. But all have not got the same kind of mental set up. Some have a mental set up in which knowing is dominant and the other two are recessive Therefore this type of man predominantly cognitive will adopt a method in which knowledge plays an important role and connation and volition play the suborinate role. These are called Jnanayogins Bnt even in the case of these mere Knowledge dissociated from emotion and Karma or action will not yield the full cup of joy in the emancipated stage, Mukti. Knowledge vitalized by activity and impelled by emotion alone delivers the spiritual goods

the case of those whose mental set up is predominantly volitional, action plays an important role and the other two are subordinate. There are Karmayogis and Arjuna belongs to this class. So his method of yoga is predominantly volitional. His activity is enlightened by knowledge and softened by emotional devotion. This mental setup is innate and unchangable. So Arjuna now cannot go to the class of Jnanayogis to take Sanyasa. He must fight renouncing fruit.

The Lord now critically examines the attitude of non activity of Arjuna. Non-activity must be accepted either because Mukti is the effect of non-activity or activity is the seed cause of cycle of birth and death and hence it is to be rejected.

Now the first alternative is dispensed with by saying that mere nonactivity does not lead to Mukti For had it been so then in some inferior type of life in which there is no intellectual setup necessary for action, there is no occasion for activity Non-activity thus has not produced Mukti For that means life has continued to live in many more bodies Mukti is to be realised not by mere non activity but renouncing motivated activity.

The second alternative also is not tenable. For if you merely give up doing work, what about

the work that has been done in many lives? Unless that collection of Karma is atoned for, there is no Mukti. Therefore the seed cause of cycle of life and death has not been rendered ineffective So there will be no Mukti.

If you give up motivated work you cannot get Mukti Nor can you get it by merely doing disinterested work. But dis-interested work, through mental purification, renunciation of pleasures and discipline of hearing, thinking and meditating creates knowledge which ensures salvation. Thus because Arjuna belongs to the peculiarly eligible class and mere inactivity does not lead to Mukti, he must take to fighting.

The Third idea that Karma is an impediment in the path of Mukti is not sound. In order to explain what kind of Karma is meant to be an impediment, the Lord tells us that we cannot completefy get rid of Karma. Any man whether ignorant or learned cannot remain even for a moment without doing some thing. The Lord alone is the independent doer and possesses freedom of action. Man has freedom of action subject to the will of God Hari. Man in his action is impelled by Hari and by the inborn qualities of nature. Thus impelled he is always busy with something No doubt there is no

option in the demands of the physical needs. We must work to supply them But work like rituals and sacrifices might he undertaken or not. Hence will plays an important role; For it can accept or reject the obligations of ritual Karmas. Hence if only the senses are restrained letting the mind free to wander, by a man he is called a hypocrite. But he who controls the senses through the mind and remains unattached. without any desire of fruit, and does work with his hands and feet, in order to fulfil the obligations of one's caste and stage of life, is superior to the former. For without doing work one cannot even make both ends meet-

It is enjoined in Smrities that he should stop doing work because work involves him in tbe cycle of birth and death Now shows that this third alternative also is untenable. For all work dedicated to Vishnu does not involve him in this worldly life. work done for other purposes is really binding in nature. Therefore one should undertake work in order to please Vishnu In Smrities only undedicated work is condemned. So one cannot set aside work absolutely. For always man is impelled by God in us, to do one or the other piece of work And another

thing is, one cannot even maintain himself without doing work. Therefore in worshipful spirit, unattached do your duty and no sin accrues to us

Then the group of the following four verses form a unit and present an argument not rational but appealing to some emotion in us. It is in the form of an exaggerated need of praise of the view. Some times it is anecdotal narrating some old story upholding the view or it may present the expirience of some in support of the view. This is called Arthavada which is not literal but referential in spirit. It is defined स्तुतिनिवापरकृति: पुराकरण: इत्ययंत्राद: Thus Arthavada is meant to be the support of the purport and it need not be taken literlly.

Having created human beings wedded to secrifices the Father said of old "by the sacrifice you beget a milch cow which yields all our desires."

You serve the gods with this sacrifice and let those gods oblige you with your desired objects. Thus helping each other you both realise the hingest good.

For gods, served by sacrifices, shower upon men coveted pleasures But these pleasures should be shared with others. He who appropriates them to himself without sharing them with others is a thief For all possessions or acquisitious are tacitly admitted that he only holds them in trust.

to be shared with others. Now the first participants in these gifts of gods are gods themselves. These gifts of foodgrains and other things are to be utilised in offerings to gods. This brings about purity in the performer of the sacrifice and in the objects that are offered. The remnants of these offerings are rendered holy and pure and they are consumed by men as things calculated to bring about special sanctity. The consumer of holy left-over, becomes free from sins, consciously or unconsciously committed. Five kinds of sacrifices are enjoined on a house-holder and Vaishwadeva is one of them. By performing such sacrifices the house holder gets immunity from sins. This is the praise of the causal theory of Karma.

Now Karma forms a cosmic cycle which must be kept moving by every one. Food produces living creatures. It is rain which helps growing of food. Sacrifices move clouds to rain. It is Karma which brings sacrifices into operation. This Karma is set in motion by Brahma who is revealed in vedas. Therefore the all-pervasive Brahma is rooted in scrifice. One who does not keep this wheel moving committs sin; for he is addicted to a selfish life.

This is the main outline of the description of the cycle. This requires a lot of explanation with the quotation of authority to arrive at a simple meaning from the figurative expression. Shri Madhva in his Bhashya has explained this Shri Raghavendra gives the same in detail. ekplanation in brief but not at the cost of lucidity. Food being digested is transformed into Semen by which impregnation is effected resulting in the birth of a creature. Parjanya is god Aditya who presides over the cloud and rain, which helps the grains to grow. Now this god Parjanya gets strength, for his operation from the offerings of ghee and other things. Or Parjanya may mean the clouds presided over by god Aditya who, wh n satisfied with sacrificial food, puts them into monsoon-operations. Yajna or sacri fice is offering of something in the name of god. Yaina is born as a part of Karma, which is enjoined on us by the supreme Brahman. This Para Brahman is revealed to us by the Vedas 11 It is the knowledge of Brahma which impels us to do good deeds. Thus sacrifice through the channel so long described, reveals Para Brahman. Therefore Lord Paramatman is rooted in sacrifice. performing sacrifice the cycle is set in motion and he who performs the sacrifice gets religious merit, as sacrifices conduce to the growth of creatures and reveal the supreme Brahman.

So he, who shuns work, harms not only himself but also the whole world. Hence great is the offence of one who wilfully takes to an easy and sinful life of inactivity, setting aside the injunction of Veda. Verily he eats sin

But a serious doubt arises when we hear inactivity condemned outright. For it is the final aim of an aspirant to reach a stage of complete absorption in which there is absolute cessation of all activity physical and mental. His mind is etsablished in Bhaghavan having his intuitive communication with him. In ecstatic joy of godvision he is disconnected in his mind with outside world, which does not exercise any impact on his mind. Then such an aspirant is free from the obligation of religious duties like Sandhya and sacrifice. It is not wilful breach of rules but under the necessity of spiritual impact on the mind he is completely withdrawn from the outside world, seeking mental equipoise and direct vision and ecstatic delight.

But this all-absorbing Samadhi seems to be a lame excuse for inactivity getting exemption from obligatory duties. For he can arrange with somebody to bring him down to the wakeful mundane world from the stage of highest meditation Just at the right moment the man appointed, according to the procedure prescribed, slowly draws him out of his Samadhi Then he may attend to his obligations- So there need be no excuse for inactivity

The objection is met with by a rejoinder of the Lord thus: Vedas do not enjoin obligatory duties on one who attains samadhi Besides such a spiritually eminent man has nothing to gain more than what he gets in Samadhi. direct contact with Atman he gets the highest delight in his mind. He cannot get anything equal to this joy; much less will he get more than that spiritual delight. Thus he is not liable to any objection if he does not attend to religious obligations- Nor does he suffer anv disadvantage by not attending to his duties towards his Guru and [God. For the delight he enjoys is far superior to any fruit he gets from such service or worship.

From another point of view now Karma is enjoined on man. The freed soul alone can be inactive and an embodied soul is always bound to do his or her duty. For a man who is emancipated lives in God fully attached to Him. God is revealed to him and he enjoys the highest delight.

He alone can afford to be inactive as that does not affect him adversely and will add to his native joy of spiritual life.

Raghavendra draws nice distinctions between even Synonyms showing their different shades of meaning to prove that the Lord has not used the words at random, but with settled intention. Two words after and with have the same meaning as that of after or strong liking or intense liking. Yet they can be distinguished as they are syntactically used with Atman or God in different cases. Such a man who is now free from bondage glowing in native light and enjoing intrinsic bliss, has a strong attachment to God, and realises the satisfaction of his liking, in God

But if there is still attachment and worseip of God in the final stage then there is no inactivity. This objection is set aside by the observation that in that happy stage there is no studied effort in any direction. There is no injunction from outside to force him to do anytning. Yet there is spontaneous flow, without any aim of realising outside objective, but with urge from his native being which scintillates in intrinsic glow and bliss at the constant contact of divine presence. That flow is worshipful from the side of the soul and gracious and benign from the side of the Supreme spirit. This communion is not laboured but natural and this is the highest that man aspires to achieve.

The Lord now admonishes Arjuna to be active as he neither falls into a forgetful trancenor has entered into the final beatitude. He should have no attachment to fruit. He must do the work assigned to him in a worshipful spirit to please God. The path of the beatitude is always through unattached and disinterested work done in worshipful spirit, which leads to intuitive knowledge.

This is not merely an accademic theory but a principle of life which has a list of notable personalities to its cridit. Aspirant like Janaka and others doing their own duty, assigned to them, have achieved Moksha in full. Even after knowledge they continued their work with the prospect of getting additional joy in Moksha. There is an additional reason also. Work, after knowledge, is not obligatory but is undertaken with pleasure in the spirit of public service which is the worship of God in the dictionary of religious attainments.

A great man is a model for a commoner for his behaviour and way of life. He accepts those things as authority which the great man accepts. Hence a great man should do his duty. The lord has nothing to get newly which he has not achieved formerly. For God is one whose all desires are fulfilled (आएतकाम).

It is compassion for the creatures, He has created, that moves Him to action. Such a huge organisation as this world requires vigilance, control and direction But the world is not merely insentient but sentient also. So the exercise of love, compassions, ympathy, benevolence is expected from the invisible Father when there is fear, trouble, misery, and death staring at us-It is this invisible hand that protects the creatures from all these dangers. If God turns a deaf ear to the cries of the world, then it will go to dogs in no time. Hence God is all cars and all eyes, while watching the world. He runs to the place of rescue in one jump and saves the Victim. There are many stories which narrate how graciously God has helped many men out of the crisis. He resides closest to us that he should not be late in His Succour-If He does not take active interest in His creation and creatures, the world would crumble down to pieces, like a house of cards. There will be utter confusion. Loss of order and peace would result in choas, on account of inattendance to duties and obligations The good will have no opportunity to realise their spiritual well - being.

It should not be objected that there will be no distinction between the ignorant mass and the learned few if both are madly engaged in unending work. For, though both are engaged in the same work yet the ignorant are engaged being attached to the fruits of work; while the learned are always free from the trammels of fruit and desire. They do the work for the love of it and for the worship of God; and they work for the good of the people, without expecting any return for it. The great man does his work without allowing the ignorant man to misunderstand him. He my grudge to work to see they reat man inactive and indolent.

The ignorant man indulges in self-conceit and arrogates to himself complete freedom of intiation and burden of the work. In order to prove how foolish his thought is Shri. Raghavendra enters into the full analysis of initiation, engagement and completion of work.

The verse in Geeta seems apparently to attribute activity to Prikriti or inborn tendencies in man and laws of nature that rule the physical universe. This upsets the theistic conception of

the cosmogony of Gita So Shri Raghavendra with skill of his interpretation on the sanction of previous authority gets theistic interpretation from those very words Prikriti means no doubt primordial matter, or psycological tendency or innnate nature But prikriti etymologically means one having the greatest role in action and that is God

So action is generated mainly at the initiation of God who is completely free, as he depends upon his own knowledge and will, for any of his undertakings Though free, God respects differences in human tedencies - that are good, indifferent, and bad, makes Man his instruments which are the product of matter, and gets work done by them in which the material cause is Satva Rajas, and Tamas Thus for every activity the main agent is God; the instrumental agent is man the material cause is matter or Satva, Rajas, Tamas Every work produced by man has the touch and colour of inborn tendency. A good man (Satva) does good work and an indifferent man does (Rajas) mixed work and the bad man does bad work. These are the facts psychological and material and divine which must be taken into account to settle the agency of work. Man alone cannot do any thing. Still he attributes to

himself free agency in work. For he is deluded by egotism.

But one who knows the truth, knows distinctly how activity is begun and maintained till its completion, attributing their respective parts to different parties in activity Action is the outcome of the will of God, innate tendencies of men and the physical and mental set up of the body. The intelligent man assigns their respective part to each party in this cooperative concern Hence the soul has no independet agency in any part of the activity. The Lord Hari is the main cause of propulsion impelling by his will, the soul to be engaged in the activity of the body and the senses which are all actuated by him to get a contact with their sense objects. Hence this good man knowing the truth that the soul is not free, does not indulge in the self-conceit of free agency; and thus is not involved in the cycle of Samsara.

But the ignorant who indulge in this conceit of free agency are always engaged in getting contact with sense objects for the sake of sense pleasure. These persons deeply immersed in sense pleasures are incorrigible and beyond mending. Hence the good should not take to this thankless task of reforming those who can never be reformed. It is the sweet will of God that such wicked

persons also should thrive in this world. Hence good men should not spend their time and energy in throwing pearls before swine.

Now Lord Krishna reminds Arjuna that he is a good and a pious man and hence he must do his duty in the way the pious man does his duty. He should fix his mind on Hari thinking Him to be Supremely superior to all; renounce all desire of fruit; and self conceit of freedom of will, knowing himself to be an instrument of God in the cosmic work. "Give up all grief and fight the battle."

"Those who believe in Me and My philosophy of work, do not entertain any bad opinion about me" says the Lord. For implicitly believing in Him they follow in his wake and get themselves free from the shackles of Karma. But those who hate Him and his philosophy and not take to the path of work, are doomed; because they are devoid of wisdom.

All people seek their own path as dictated by their innate tendency, and the accumulated mental effects of the previous work done. Neither self control nor preaching prevails against these hard facts of life. Even a learned man cannot go against his nature. For the senses and sense-objects have their repulsions and attractions settled by the innate tendencies of man. We should not go within the orbit of this sort of activity of senses with objects, which are great hindrances to self-realisation.

Arjuna had raised an objection that no work should be undertaken; much less a terrible war in which passions play an important part. So long Lord Krishna answered the first part of the objection by saying that Karma is obligatory, Now he answers that war in the case of Kshatriya must be fought as it is his obligatory duty. One's assigned duty though defective is far better than the duty assigned to another caste and stage of life. Death while doing one's own duty like war is more welcome. Another's duty is really a source of danger.

Lord Shri Krishna had casually, in the course of his musical discourse talked about evil and the evil doer. Arjuna came to know that it was passions that lead to evil Love, hate, avarice, delusion, pride and envy are all involved in the conspiracy of the fall of man. Now Arjuna wants to know who is the archeonspirator of this gang of evil doers.

The Lord replies it is greed or insatiable desire which is the arch-foe of mankind, and the cause of his down-fall. The henchman of greed is anger which does not require seperate attention when greed is suppressed. For anger is dependent on greed for its very existence. Greed cannot be conquered by satisfying it. The more its hunger is quenched keener it becomes. Under its evil influence man becomes ready to commit any sort of sin, like the murder of a Brahmin. So we must mark him out as our avowed enemy in our spiritual realisation.

Greed and anger are material products and insentient in nature. These have no power to besiege the soul. In the kingdom of God there are spirits and Gods who have power to enter into the body and preside over different functions of the senses and mind. There are two parallel administrations in the body. Evil administration under the rule of Kali. But Kali is not independent. He is also under the full entrol of Shri Hari. So it is not double government. Kama is presided over by Kalanemi, a very powerful and malignant evil doer.

Mind is the window which reveals to us God Shri Hari- Now this mind is covered by kama or greed so that the mind is not able to disclose to us God Hari. That is how it affects us adversely in our spiritual career. Jeevas are souls, by eternal nature are good, indifferent and bad. These three kinds are differently affected by this greed. The good or Satwikas are thinly covered by greed as smoke covers flames of fire. It means good people have often faint glimpses of good and god and hence they find god on their margin of mental activity. But men of mixed nature have a thicker veil on their mind like dust collected on a mirror. Then evil minded or the bad people have the thickest cover which is like amnion enveloping the embryo

This affects the knowledge of the soul So the Jeeva is not able to have correct knowledge which alone can save him from spiritual ruin. This greed as a cover affects the knower the subject, God the object of knowledge, and the mind the means of knowledge.

In spiritual progress the firt step is to get facts and theory of spiritual life from the Shastras. A systematic and organised knowledge alone leads to meditation and God vision. Now Kama or Greed obstructs the knowledge from the Shastras, conducive to mature God-vision.

For all these reasons Kama or Greed must be conquered Hence Lord Krishna gives its method of operation and its seat. Greed is entrenched behind the senses, mind, and reason-Having occupied these seats this arch enemy attacks the soul and deludes him obstructing his knowledge.

"A brief reference to the psychology of Reason, Mind and the senses cannot be out of place.....In order that volition may act it is necessary that intellect should marshal experie nces, store them in distinct pigeon holes of the brain, and produce them whenever necessary in groups of associated ideas. Unless this is done, no wish for a coveted object is possible. It is the whole history of the object including all the pleasures it ever gave us or others in the past, that should stand before the mind's eye and fall within the mental perview, before a wish can be directed to it. -- Lower than Budhi is mind. the internal organ which receives and transmits sensory messages through in-going and out-going nerves. Mind is the storehouse of sensation and ideas in which these are siezed and sifted by intellect and grouped into classified bundles. Unless the mind is attentive so as to respond to the calls and demands of the senses their activity cannot result in perception Hence desire captures the mind so that it may get

stocked with percept which develop later into concepts" (The Bhagavadgeeta by C. M. Padmanabhachr.)

This much of psychology is enough to explain Shri Krishna's statement about Mind Budhi and senses. Hence we must concentrate upon the senses first and try to get them under our control. The senses should not be allowed to indulge in sensuality. Senses, due to contact with sense objects, run madly after them. But Mind and reason should not be allowed to run with those sensations. Even if they come into contact with the sense objects, they should not be violently affected by them. Then soul should gird up its loins to destory the greed by making the bed too hot for it. Thus self control leads to conquest of Kama or greed

No amount of physical force or mental resolution without the enlightenment of spiritual knowledge, can curb these violent senses. Spiritual knowledge is the knowledge of the supremacy of Paramatma over sentient beings and insentient things. The sentient world consists of ordinary souls and gods. In order to prove the Supremacy of Shri Hari the hierarchy of Divinities and the gradations of what they preside over are presented. Senses are superior (to objects) and the

mind is superior to senses. Reason is higher than the mind. But He is higher than Reason. The senses have many deities like Soma, Kubera Surya, Varuna Aswin, Agni, Indra and others-Sauparni and Varuni and Uma are the deities over the sense objects. The former are superior to the latter. Manas is presided over by Rudra, Shesha and Garuda who are superior to those who preside over senses. Here there is some discre pancy in the gradation of the deities which is explained away in many ways. Budhi is superior to Manas and its presiding divinity is Sarasawati. After Budhi come Mahat and Avyakakta which are not mentioned in Geeta. Thus knowing Paramatman to be superior to all these, thinking his mind, an steadily this Paramatman in aspirant should try to destroy this invincible enemy Kama.

4.3

This parth of disinterested work is much dilated upon. Vishnu is at the apex of the spiritual pyramid. Karma is now going to be treated in detail, and then knowledge is explained so as to show forth its importance. So long this theory of disinterested Karma was described as a way of life. Krishana now shows that it had been adopted as such by many in the past. He also traces its decline to its causes, encouraging its regeneration by the people. He tells Arjuna that he is now reviving that path of disinterested Karma for his sake. Because Arjuna is his dearest and closest friend. This is a great secret in spiritual wisdom and it is disclosed to him because he is fit for the confidence.

Arjuna is not one to accept every word even when a great authority expresses it. He would very critically test even Krishna's statements. Krishna has told that he himself first initiated sun-god into this Karmayoga. Then this sun-god taught this to Manu and Manu to Ikshwaku Thus apostle after apostle carried this torch for many generations. At last the influence of this path waned and it became defounct and useless

for practice. People forgot all about it till Krishna now revived it for the sake of Arjuna.

But Arjuna has now a sincere doubt to be cleared. Krishna is a contemporary of Arjuna, while Vivaswan or sun god belonged to the hoary past. How should Arjuna believe that the present-day-Krishna spoke to Vivaswan of the ancient days. So Arjuna's doubt is that Krishna indulges in anachronism and his answer clears this doubt and presents chronological justification.

But one thing we must remember that Arjuna is not a raw and fresh spiritual graduate. He is god-visioned but has been subjected to temporary suspension of spiritual knowledge, being under the influence of very thin layer of Ne-Science. Even in this state he has not forgotten that Bhagavan has many incarnations as human soul has many rebirths. So it is in the fitness of things that Krishna must have preached the sungod in another form which he had assumed in those days. It is not this doubt which Arjuna wanted to get cleared. In the previous chapters the distinction between human soul and Paramatman was introduced. Arjuna wanted to know more convincing evidences to prove this

distinction. Bhagavan presents these evidences His doubt was, how, why and when, he had his Avatars. And Bhagavan clears that point.

Krishna has many past births as Arjuna has Krishna knows them all, while Arjuna does not know them. Births of the Lord are different from the births of human beings. The Lord is completely free in assuming any form, he likes, at any time, he likes. He may also withdraw that form at any time he likes But man is forced to be born with a body not of his choice, and he is forced to leave it even againt his will. The Lord's body is his essential self while man's body is made up of flesh and blood. Hence the distinction of human soul and supreme soul is convincincingly established.

Now Shri Krishna tells Arjuna the principle of his Avatarhood or incarnation. Incarnation is an innate principle of the transcendental reality. Immancace has brought the Supreme reality within its creation but still Brahma or Paramatma is invisible. It is Avatar or incarnation that presents reality before the creatures

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and this tendency is its innate (देवस्येण: स्वभावोऽपं) nature. Brahma is selfborn and eternal and is invisible by nature. In his Supreme wisdom and sweet will, Brahma wishes to appear in visible form. Then it takes the support of some material principle and manifests itself. This Supreme Reality, there by, does not suffer even a bit in independence, in pure consciousness or bliss Hence there is complete identity between the transcendent Reality and descended Avatar-This manifestation is in reality some natural activity without any intrinsic purpose to serve. But it has some extrinsic purpose in view. And that is the condition of life and soul. As long as soul adjusts its life to the conditions of the Supreme Reality or Para Brahman, so long life moves in the direction of the conditions of the perfect unfolding. But when the soul forgets its spiritual end and moves towards material prosperity it forgets the very principle of creation and there is chaos and anarchy Paramatma is not an inactive spectator, but an active principle working through spiritual evolution to the settled end. To re-fill the spent up spiritual energy in the soul, the Supreme soul manifests itself and gets contact with human souls to charge

them, with spiritual energy. This is the extrinsic purpose of the invisible principle becoming visible.

Avataras are all equal in status and substance with the mother principle of Supreme Reality. They are real and eternal. They are non-material and identical in essence and compositon with God, in every respect. Avatar appears and disappears at its own sweet will and pleasure. Now Arjunawill understand how Paramatma is different from human souls.

Thus we must understand the principle of divine Avatars as stated above, maintaining the supremacy and indepndence of the sublime principle. This good und retanding helps man in spiritual realisation

There are men who have realised their soul and the spirit. They are completely free from fear, passion and attachment. They are entirely dependent on the Supreme spirit which they believe to be the principle of activity in the visible world. Through knowledge and penance they have all their impurities burnt up, and have resorted to Paramatman with a graceful resemblance of Him.

'As you sow so you reap' is also true in the spiritual world. The way in which the devotees approach Paramatman, settles what they are going to get in the end. Krishna alone is the supreme Brahman and he is the person who receives all offerings in sacrifice. All undertakings and activities secular and sacred bear fruit through His agency Worshippers of other gods also get their fruit through Krishna For in the end all worshippers of other gods, realise the Supremacy of Hari and surrender themselves to Him.

Thus it is Hari alone who can distribute rewards for one's activities, when that devotee surrenders with devotion to Him-Worshippers of other gods, for petty rewards, do not get the great bleassing of mukti. For it is God Hari who is the originator of the System of four castes. These castes are founded on the basis of natural characteristics and division of labour or work. The three qualities of Sattva Rajas and Tamas are the fundamental humours which settle the native tendencies of man. These are classified here as purely Sattvikas or Sattvika Sattvikas and then contaminated Sattvikas or Rajas Sattivikas and then condemned Sattvikas or Tamasa Sattvikas Here in the caste system are involved Rajas Sattvikas. The Brahmins are those whose nature is constituted more of Sattva and less of Rajoguna. Kshatriyas are those whose nature is made up of Rajasa a bit more than Sattva. The Vaishyas have their nature made up of Rajas and an equal quality of Sattva and of Tamas less in quantity than both Shudra's nature is constituted with Tamas more than Rajas and with Sattva more than Tamas in quantity. This is the division of Castes based on the three fundamental qualities. And the divison, based on activity of work is treated exhaustively in the 18th Chapter of the Geeta.

God Hari is the prime cause of all modified things in the world, but he himself is not caused by anything. Therefore He is called uncaused cause Nor is He affected by any of the activities he has undertaken. For He is free from the desire of fruit as he is not attached to it. This is the secret of His greatness. He who understands Lord Krishna's principle of work in this spirit will get immunity from the evil influence of activities.

In olden times also people who wish to get salvation followed this very path of work. There fore Lord Krishna asked Arjuna just to follow the very path Even the path of Karma is very difficult. For it is very difficult to know work, no-work and miswork. Even the lerned are bewildered and cannot clear the confusion created by these three. Now Krishna offers to explain clearly these three with their distinguishing characteristics. Knowing these and knowing Shri Hari, the ancients followed the parth of Karma. Arjuna should get this entangled confusion cleared. The one cardinal principle is, all activity has its source in Paramatman.

Therefore while doing work one must realise that God Hari alone is the independent doer or agent, while all others have derived their agency from Him and Shri Hari does not need the help of any one. For in sleep when all our senses along with mind rest in inactivity God Hari is even active in creating dream-objects out of mind stuff. In any huge activity He depends upon Himself. This is the secret of all activities and he who knows this secret is really a seer endowed with capacity to adopt means to realise the end. The final beatitude is as good as won by him.

In Geeta Tatparya Shri. Madhva derives Karma to denote the Jeeva in the sense "of one who is bound by law." Then Akarma means God? He being above law. The learned man knows that there is no work in Jeeva but in Akarma or god he finds the source of all activity. The last line has the same meaning in both the interpretations.

There are two kinds of workers in the field-Janaka belongs to the first kind who works like house-holders. The others are ascetics who lead a life of renunciation. Each of these two workers works for the good of man-kind by unselfish love and service. The first kind is called 'work' and the second kind is called 'no work' but both are characterised by the mark of selfless love.

Now the nature of Karma is explained to us. A wise man's activity is characterised by freedom from selfishness and egotism. The undertakings pass through the chastening fire of knowledge. So a good work or pious work is that which is not impelled by any selfish motive, and should not be undertaken in a spirit of egotism. And the work is one enjoined by the ruler of Varna and Ashrama. Knowing Hari to be the independent agent and himself entirely dependent on Him, the wise man moves in the world.

This wise man renounces all attachment to the reward of action; and is always contented; and he does not depend upon any one but his Maker. Thus engaged in huge work he remains virtually non-active.

Desireless, having control over mind and senses, being free from all attachment, the wise man is engaged in bodily work. Still he is not subject to penal sin. Shri Raghavendra explains bodily work as work for the maintenance of body, or work in which the body and the senses are engaged. Still he does not get any penalty for such work as attachment.

A detailed description of the mental set up of this wise man will explain his status and attitude. Contented with what little he gets, not subject to the evil influence of the pairs of opposites, unaffected by success or failure, he remains free from bondage, though he is engaged in work. He is not affected by any passion like envy or anger

Now Lord Krishna elaborately explains how one can remain inactive (अकर्ष) though doing work, how such a work does not affect the doer with the evil effects of activity

So long the nature of Karma is explained.

He now explains what "The state of mind steady in knowledge" means, while engaged in sacrificial

or secular work. The man of knowledge, thinks that the whole affair is Brahman. The articles of sacrifice, the offering, the fire in which offering is poured, the priests and the end to be reached are all Brahman. The meditation accompanying sacrifice is Brahman. This is not an eulogy of Karma in a flattering mood. It is a considerate expression, of course, in a strong, figurative language, of the idea of sacrifice. Though different things and agents are engaged in the act of sacrifice there is one thing running through all these, yet invisible to all, engaged in it, and that is Brahman or the one reality that guides and directs the activity in full swing. It is the source of existence and activity and knowledge of all those engaged in sacrifice. Raghavendra quotes an authority for describing things as identical with, that are really different from Brahman The rule is:— He who is the source of existence, activity and knowledge of things and beings is said to be one with them. The priests have their existence, activity, and knowledge, dependent upon Brahman The things used in sacrifice also are dependent upon Brahman. Hence they are all said to be one with Brahman. One must be steady and fixed in this kind of knowledge. All offerings are to be made to Him who is the only authority to receive them. Thus surrendering our freedom and attibuting all independent agency to Shri Hari, if we perform any deed, then that is Yajnartha Karma or activity to please Hari. This sort of Karma yoga leads to selfrealisation.

Meu have adopted different varieties of Karma. There are ascetics whose only kind of sacrifice is worship or meditation of Go l Hari-House-holders make offerings in the fire of Brahman, by means of Agnihotra dedicated to Vishnu.

Some others offer as sacrifice, the senses, the ear and others into the fires of self-restraint. Others offer as sacrifice sense-objects namely sound and the rest into the fires of senses Self-restraint is considered as worship of Hari; while enjoyment of objects of senses with moderation is also undertaken in a worshipful attitude.

Similarly the five breaths and the five senses of actions offer their work in the fire of self-restraint kindled by knowledge. The simple meaning is, that the Yogins are engaged in curbing the senses of activity like hands and feet and the five breaths like Prana and Apana. This

self restraint is not merely a body of vital exercises but it is undertaken just to please Shri Hari-For Hari likes a man of self restraint and not one of self-indulgence.

Others there are who offer material offerings or observe vows or are absorbed in meditation. Some others still busy themselves in the study of Vedas. Still others are engaged in getting knowledge. All these are sacrifices; for they are done just to please Hari

Some are engaged in the exercises of breathing to control breath. Still others have their control over diet in order to have control over senses. All these are activities in the right direction and sacrificial in the large sense of them. Thus all those that are engaged in different kinds of sacrifices, eat what has remained after offering is made which is called Amrita or nectar. They all go in the end to the eternal Brahman. Those who do not perform any sacrifice, will not get happiness in this world, and they will not be able to get it in the next.

Shri Raghavendra beautifully sums up what has been said, in a few words. C. M. Padmana-bhachar in his monumental work on Geeta, ren ders the purport of Shri Raghavendra in English which I quote here at length— "There is no doubt

that God vision followed by Divine Grace is the immediate means of salvation...... It is only indirectly that other truths properly realised lead to spiritual knowledge and God-vision, by purifying the mind and enabling the devotee to choose and perform the right sort of work in the right spirit. What Arjuna is taught now is that every kind of sacrfice is a kind of internal or external activity. This is made with reference to the possible doubt that there may be sacrifices such as knowledge, worship, or prayer which consist not of actions or work. And Arjuna might choose some one of those sacrifices not involving action or work. The Lord replies-"All of them is work". The meanig is "you cannot choose for adoption any sacrifice that is not work that is not the result of some activity, be it of mind or body Hence if you give up your dutiful line of action and adopt asceticism you are pursuing a line of work and are not out of the pale of action. The net result will be that, in giving up your military duties you will be only abandoning what is your Dharma without in any way achieving your primary object of avoding action. Hence you have to realise the lesson that all sacrifices are but actions. Once you do this, the road to salvation is open and clear. You will see no

reason to prefer any kind of work to battle. Doing duty in right spirit, you will certainly go on-ward in the path of spiritual progress and therefore, you will of your own choice and wish engage in battle and resolve to obtain knowledge, and emancipation through the performance of selfless Dharma."

Raghavendra at the end adds a grammatical note on the form विभोध्यमें which is a future form (लड़त) But "If you know all sacrifices are productions of actions, then you desire to fight the battle for the sake of salvation." How is this meaning possible from the verb in future tense? Raghavendra fights a stiff grammatical battle to prove that it is a desiderative form or सज़त. Before a सजत there is rduplication and the form will be ममस्यसे, Here there is Guna and the the reduplicative syllable is dropped. This is the practice in the Vedas which being prior in time to the aphorisms of panini, are not bound by them. Geeta has adopted these Vedic forms. If this is found too archaic Raghayendra is ready to concede the future form, Then the meaning will be-"knowing all sacrifices as productions of actions and performing them you will be released." Of all these sacrifices, in which material objects are used as offerings, the sacrifices directly leading to knowledge are superiorAll actions find their fruition in the knowledge of Brahma. Raghavendra gives another beautiful meaning. Even a little work done in the light of knowledge of Brahman, bears rich reward He interpretes खिल to mean आसमन्तात् खिलं अन्य अस्यत्य very little.

'Because knowledge is superior to activity, the men of wisdom will teach you Sshastra imparting knowledge, being pleased with your service, salutation and repeated questions, and that, you must obtain' was the advice given to Arjuna by shri Krishna No doubt Arjuna is a man of god vision; he is a realised soul-Yet on account of extraneous reasons his mind has been clouded and he requires a refresher course of advice in deep spiritual matters. Shri, Krishna is the right person to conduct this advice. So he has begun his advice and he will continue it. Therefore उपवेष्यान्त (they advise) means उपवेष्यान: (we advise).

Arjuna has fallen into deep erronous knowledge which has resulted in infatuation, and perversion. Shri Krishna assures him that the teaching he imparts is of the superb quality and it never allows ignorance and infatuation to overtake him. The present cloud is scattered and the darkness is dispelled. And in that divine

light Arjuna will be able to see Shri Hari as the one abode of all beings. Arjuna will no longer think his duty of fighting a battle, a sinful action. Though full of violence and killing fighting a battle, for a soldier is a sacred duty which when undertaken disinterestedly and devotedly leads to god-vision.

The most heinous crimes and appalling sins are crossed over by god vision just as a river is crossed over by a boat. Just as a heap of dry faggots is butnt to ashes by enkindled fire, so also all Karma other than Prarabdha is burnt by god-vision. Hence there is nothing more effective in purification than god-vision. A long and steady practice of yoga results in god-vision. The requisite ingradients of Yoga are strong faith, Loyalty to god Hari, severe self-restaint which all lead to god-vision; then peace is settled soon in the mind. This is Mukti and it is realised immediately if there is no obstacle of Prarabdha. If there is, it must be exhausted by working it out and then Mukti is realised.

But one who has no faith, has no true knowledge He is a man of doubts and uncertainties. Such a man cannot thrive here, in this world or there, in heaven.

A man whose mind is fixed on Hari, and who has renounced the fruit of action and has surrendered all his activity to God, has his doubts cleared by god-vision. No activity can bind him.

Therefore, as duties must be fulfilled, as there is a rich harvest for a dutiful life and as there is condemnation for avoiding duties, Arjuna should try to cut asunder mental doubts by the sharp sword of knowledge. "As a Means to this, do your duty. Hence get up and be ready to fight."

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